Daniel and the Boys in the Band

***

To Anne my travelling soul mate

I am coming to the meeting in the air,
In the sweet, sweet by and by;
I am going to meet you, meet me there
In that home beyond the sky;
Such singing you will hear, never heard by mortal ear,
'Twill be glorious, I do declare!
God’s own Son will be the leading one
At our meeting in the air.

***

This book is copyright: Brian E. R. Limmer

© Brian E. R. Limmer

January 2026

Table of Contents

Foreword.....5
Introduction.....14
The Greatest Question of All Time.....14
An Antichrist in Every Age.....16
Introducing the Boys in the Band.....20
Isaiah Was a Foundational Member.....20
Jeremiah: The Second Guy In The Band.....25
Ezekiel and Jeremiah Became Mates & Corresponded.....26
Daniel And His God.....27
Backing Boys: Micah, Obadiah and Amos.....32
Chapter 2: Defining Time.....35
Month.....37
Year.....38
Day.....39
Hour.....40
Week.....40
Jubilee Year.....40
Rest Day / Gap Year.....41
Chapter 3: The Battle Behind The Scenes.....45
Genesis 3: Enemies in the Making.....45
Who is an Edomite?.....55
The Nations Choose Their Own Allegiance.....60
Chapter 4: Identifying Nations and People.....63
Who Are My Ancestors?.....65
Where Are They Now?.....66
Chapter 5: Dividing the Years.....75
The First Period (49 Years).....75
When will This Period Begin?.....76
The second period (434 years).....77
What Happens At The End Of This Period?.....78
The Purpose Of This Period According to Daniel.....81
Six Purposes For This Time.....82
Chapter 6: A Time For Gentiles.....88

The Gap Year is Necessary for the Jews.....91
The ‘Gap-Year’ is Necessary for the Church.....96
Where the book Revelation Connects.....97
Chapter 7: INTERLUDE.....101
The Rapture.....102
The Rise of the Antichrist.....104
The Abomination of Desolation.....106
The Tribulation.....107
The Battle of Gog and Magog.....108
The Judgment Of The Nations.....109
The Binding of Satan and the Millennial Kingdom.....110
The Great White Throne Judgment And The New Creation.....111
Chapter 8: The Gap-Year.....112
Time Out On Sovereignty.....113
Sovereignty of God:.....114
Daniel and the church.....131
The New Covenant and the Indwelling Spirit.....136
Chapter 9: Final Days.....139
Dealing with speculation.....142
The Tribulation.....146
The Rapture and Resurrection.....148
Armageddon / Magog invasion.....151
The Kingdom Age.....152
From idea to Fruition.....156

Foreword

Not another book on beasts with ten horns! Why do I need it?

The story of Daniel and the boys in the band needs to be retold to remind the atheist that he has some explaining to do. If the cosmos is not running to a plan beyond the control of humans, how could these guys predict half a millennium into the future so accurately? If there is no plan behind the universe, how could they give so much detail? The story of Daniel and the boys needs to be retold to remind the agnostic there is a wealth of history to check out. Creation gives plenty of evidence that there is a design behind nature. The story of Daniel and the boys needs to be retold for the enthusiastic Christian theologian, who, by his brilliant mind, has so organised future events, thinking events must follow his doctrine. The Pharisees tried that and got it wrong. Daniel keeps some things secret and out of reach of logic on purpose. The story of Daniel also needs to be retold to encourage Christian pilgrims through life's journey. Scripture tells us to expect many strange events in the future. These need to be anchored in the assurance of God's ability to deliver, by reviewing His record of the past. Probably, out of all the prophets, Daniel's time is closest to our own. Throughout history, events have come round again and again. *'As in the days of Noah'*, says one. *'These are the days of Elijah*,' says

another. Well, today we are still seeing the days Daniel predicted all those years ago.

Nebuchadnezzar was top dog at the time of Daniel. He believed in the divine right of Kings and ruled a huge chunk of the world, behaving accordingly. His ego was big enough to build a gold-plated statue of himself some 90^{ft} high. His craving for security, significance and self-worth demanded everyone must come and bow to it. Unlike Pharaoh of old who believed he was the top god, Nebuchadnezzar believed he was appointed by agreement of all the gods to be the greatest ever. He probably thought Pharaoh a little naive as he recalled the time Moses said, 'I will fill the land with frogs.' Pharaoh asked his wise men to do the same. Surely it would have made more sense to ask his wise-men to take them away. Nebuchadnezzar's wisdom was greater than that, he asked his wise men to tell him his dream. If they could tell him what he had dreamed, then he could have more confidence when it came to their interpretation. The days of Daniel and the boys of the band are back again. Media-news today does not come without comment from a 'wise person'. Today we call them experts or consultants but the task of predicting how events will pan out is the same. Times have not moved that far from the days of sages and wise men

When early prophets predicted a future person, nation or prophet, they would not necessarily know his name. In that

case, a prophecy has to describe by type. When Isaiah predicted that Elijah would come just before Messiah, for example, he was predicting that one *like* Elijah would come. He was not saying Elijah would be reincarnated. He was saying a prophet of similar personality, life style, and character would come. That gave his future audience a picture by type. If he had said, ‘Isaiah would come’, then we would rightly look for a well dressed upper class man who spoke with a plum in his mouth, Isaiah lived among aristocracy, and schooled at the academy of kings. He was not brought up in the desert, living on locusts and wild honey. That is not disparaging; it simply gave a picture of what to expect in the prophet that was to come.

In saying the days of Daniel are back, we can also expect the rise of a strong egoist leader who believes he controls the world by his wisdom and his authority. We will not be given his name. But there will be many ‘wise persons’ who will want to allocate one. This tendency is not a unique feature of this time and this period. Many egotistic leaders have come and gone, and many have been labelled as the Antichrist, and I expect many will be so prescribed in the future. I am saying that these times mirror in many ways the days of Daniel, and in that we can take comfort by reading how Daniel handles those days. For sure Daniel did handle them, as Nebuchadnezzar gave Daniel charge of everything except his own egotistic glory.

One thing different stands out about this age. There are any number of people who say there is no God in heaven. They might say human beings have control of their own destiny. Of course they are entitled to their conclusion, but it would make their view much more plausible if they could answer the questions Daniel raises. How could Daniel predict so accurately and in so much detail, to the tune of a period of 490 years. How could one human being know, that other human beings would rise and make decisions, exactly as predicted and written down so many years after their time? Many have tried to answer that in vain. History is witness to the fact that Daniel spoke his prophecy, wrote it down, had it translated into the Greek Septuagint writings under the orders of Alexander in the third century^{BC}. We see them play out precisely in the first century^{AD}. We have the date when the prophecy was told, and when it was to begin. Daniel declared it. He said a future king would start the timing by announcing the Jews must go back to their own land and rebuild the temple. That decree to go home, was given by Darius. He said, '*Go Home, build a temple and pray regularly to your god for me'*. This edict can be seen, in stone, in the British Museum today.[1]

Daniel said four nations would rise, one after the other in the following 434 years, and they did! He said each of the first three would swallow the preceding one as they expanded, and they did! He said the forth would not be

1 The Cyrus Cylinder 512 BC.

defeated but disintegrate, and the Roman empire was never defeated, it just fragmented and scattered over Europe. He said at the end of 490 years, the Messiah would ride into Jerusalem, be taken by the people, and be cut off from the land of the living, and it happened precisely! He said, after this the Jewish nation would once again be scattered around the world to give Gentiles a period of time to come into the kingdom, and they were! He said that their great temple would once again be demolished, and it was, in 70^{AD}! He said, as the time of the Gentiles draws to a close, the Nation of Israel would be reborn and the people gathered again in their homeland. They were in 1926^{AD}. The prophets said the nation would be born in a day, and it was, at the signing of the Belfort Treaty! How then can the future of the world be decided by humans when this has already been declared and recorded in writing before those humans have been born?

Daniel has no intention of giving secrets away before time, so speculating (which is no better than betting) has become rife. Many have tried to read into Daniel what is not there, but God himself has said he did not give prophecy for our speculation; he gave it so that when it comes true, we can know there is a God in heaven who is conducting this world on an unstoppable route, and toward a determined conclusion.

And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does you may believe.[2]

The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?[3]

One thing humans cannot do is know the future. They can speculate about the future. They can predict the future on the grounds of probability. That is because creation operates on reliable laws. They can aim at something and use their creative powers to bring it about, but humans are not in charge of creation to determine where or when its destiny should go. For the skeptics, humanist or atheists, there is indisputable evidence within these prophecies that we do not determine world events; Events are determined by a realm of unseen forces that guide us down the passage of time. Of course we are obliged to check these out for ourselves and not just dismiss statements or follow every tangent of thought that enters our head. Checking prophecy against history, archaeology and other scientific disciplines can only conclude that there is a mind, a force and a direction behind this four-dimensional realm, and that it knows where it is going, even if we cannot see it[4].

Daniel, for example, is one of the boys in the band we call prophets. We know Daniel interpreted the dreams of

2 John 14:29
3 Gen 18:17 – 18
4 Three dimensions plus time

Nebuchadnezzar in 604^{BC}, because Nebuchadnezzar was a real person and we can state it was in the second year of his reign that he had the dream. Daniel predicted accurately four kingdoms would rise in the world, each consuming the kingdom before. He predicted them in the correct order, describing them by national characteristics recognisable, not only in their time but ours also. Even though some of those kingdoms did not exist at the time, they came, just as Daniel had said. Daniel set them in a framework of time that proved amazingly accurate hundreds of years later. That is a pretty big accumulative bet, so much so, that skeptics have tried hard to discredit it saying it must have been written after the time of fulfilment. But any reasonably historic search shows clearly that not only was the prophecy given in 604^{BC} but it was written into early scriptures and translated into Greek when Alexander set seventy-scholars to seal it in the Septuagint scriptures around 286^{BC} [5]. One great tactic humans have when we don't like to admit something is correct, is to build a straw-argument, speculate on it and use the straw argument to discredit the whole. After all, if everybody calls everybody-else '*fake-news*', nobody knows what the real news is. Daniel, and the other guys in the band, prophesied facts that have since shown true and in detail. But speculating on who '*little-Horn'* or '*the Beast'*, or '*The great Antichrist*' might be, simply side

5 The very first translation of the Hebrew Bible was made into Greek, probably as early as the third century BC. This, the so-called Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, is dated to the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt (285-246 BC).

tracks the facts of the future. People take the misinterpretation of the prophecy and discount the whole prophecy. No amount of speculation will stop the prophecy coming true but it is not believed because of the wrong interpretation. All this can give us great confidence that Daniel was right when he says:

> *Daniel answered the king and said, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery that the king has asked, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days* [6].

If '*God is not the author of confusion'*, I must logically conclude that confusion for us, as for the king, came in the interpretation of wise men, enchanters, and magicians. According to Daniel chapter-two, the wise men's method of interpretation was to hear the dream, then apply it to the latest prediction of their science. In modern-day terms, 'wise men' would make the latest consensus and speculation fit the news by turning it into a credible narrative. In short, 'fake news!' Daniel did not speculate in his interpretation; what he did not know, he did not speak. He did not know who the four kingdoms would be, because they had not yet been born. He stopped short at what God had shown him, and for that, he was acclaimed, the wisest of all wise men. Daniel had not the slightest ambition to become the '*wise man of Camelot*'.

6 Dan 2:27

My curiosity behind this book is simply this: to try to understand *how* the prophets saw time and culture, to try to understand the nature of the spiritual battle behind world conditions, and to try to understand why God declared his intentions ahead of time anyway.

Introduction

The Greatest Question of All Time

What is one question humans have been asking since the dawn of civilisation? Without a doubt, it must be, ‘Who is in charge around here?’ Mankind asked the weather, and the weather replied, ‘I Am’! The parent asked the crying baby, and the baby bawled louder, ‘I Am’! The citizen asked the leader, and the leader raised his sword and said, ‘I Am!’ World leaders strut their mightiest armies on the parade ground, asking the world, ‘Who is in charge?’ And the world answers back with an earthquake or a tsunami, saying ‘I am’!

The race for the greatest world army began when the ark was opened and the people came out. God reminded them, ‘Spread out and replenish the whole earth’. Nimrod moved eastward into the vale of Babel and said to the people, ‘We will camp here, keep together now, and we will build a name for ourselves.’ Out of Nimrod came a pattern for world leaders that still exists today. Notice how the techniques of Nimrod are still the basic techniques of dictators today.

Nimrod (semantic: *“to rebel”*) was the first person after the flood to be called ‘a mighty man’. He was a mighty hunter ‘before the Lord’. But something changed because he decided later to oppose God by setting about to

establish a kingdom called Babylon. Later, the famous hanging gardens made it the world's first *'must visit'* site for the rest of the world. Nimrod expanded his kingdom base by spreading from there to build new cities including: Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar, into these cities, only his closest followers were allowed to live. Nimrod was a despot with an enormous ego, brilliant communication skills, and subtle negotiating skills. He started out well, as many dictators do, but turned his popularity into a power base later. His power turned into idolatry and greed. He kept his power by military might and unspeakable cruelty. He first stood up to God when God said "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth"[7]. Nimrod instead, sought to unite the people in one place by building the great Tower of Babel. 'This great project must reach into Heaven'[8]. He convinced his people, and united them under the famous slogan, 'Make ourselves Great', (MOG), which only reveals Nimrod's ambitious and prideful nature. His massive ego craved glory, hoping to have an everlasting monument to himself[9]. His was the seed that continued along time and inspired following boastful kings of Babel and Babylon[10]. Nimrod exemplified self-dependence and arrogance, attempting to build an empire that exalted wealth, and human ambition over divine obedience without shame. One source suggests

7 (Genesis 9:1)
8 (Genesis 11:4)
9 Hanging Gardens of Babylon and other great monuments were attributed to Nebuchadnezzar
10 (see Daniel 4:30–37),

that “Nimrod was undoubtedly the first powerful, charismatic hero figure of the ancient world [11]. Whatever, he was the first person after the ark to set himself up as a demigod.

An Antichrist in Every Age

Daniel and the prophets will draw our attention to a later Antichrist. Our modern thought line will immediately think of a person, but Nimrod shows the Antichrist as a motivation, a movement, a rebellion under a spiritual drive. By its nature and determination, it will personify again and again in history in other leaders. Antichrist literally means Pseudo-Christ, meaning anyone who will impersonate Christ while opposing everything Christ stands for. Anti-God might be a better term. The spiritual drive here is the driving force behind Nimrod. Later Antichrist’s will have a specific objective to deceive the followers of Christ, but the force behind them, by other names, is the same. The underlying desire to de-thrown God reoccurs in all history, and table-one gives a list of other names by which he is recognised in scripture.

Because the first recognition of the Antichrist by the church came in the form of the Roman soldiers who destroyed the temple, many make a case from scripture pointing to the clay feet on the statue in Daniel, that the

11 The phrase, ‘confusion of languages’ from Genesis 11:7–9, could better be understood as, ‘divided their opinions’, which spread them out, dividing the people by opinion, place and language.

Antichrist will be a second rising of the Roman Empire in the last days. But the principal here is, that there is an Antichrist spirit behind many nations or rulers who opposed Christ, so Antichrist can come in many forms of nation or leader. As a point of conjecture, the Roman consul that destroyed the temple was the 10th legion which was not Roman but a conscript of Assyrian soldiers, they were not Roman.

Chapter-three will explore the detail, but when Isaiah prophesied, *'Elijah will come to proclaim the Messiah'*, he spoke of the spirit, character, mission, mannerism, and characteristics of Elijah. These characteristics reappeared in the person of John the Baptist to announce the Messiah has come. Isaiah did not know his name when he prophesied, but he recognised the spiritual character behind the person. Jesus recognised John the Baptist was synonymous with Elijah.

So it is by way of introduction, we must not only see the historic events but the spiritual motivation and direction behind them. Because we have been introduced to a spiritual war being waged behind world events, we need not be looking for one person. To see the person without the spiritual battle is not to see at all. There will be many physical manifestations of the Antichrist, the beast or the false prophet because the motivation and character behind them will be revealed in many people. Our task is not to

announce, pinpoint or predict a person, but to recognise the driving power behind a person when we meet them.

Belial: Nahum 1:15
The Adversary:
The Assyrian: Isaiah 10:5, Micah 5:5-6
The Bloody and Deceitful Man: Psalms 5:5
The Chief Prince:
The Crooked Serpent: Isaiah 27:1
The Cruel One: Jeremiah 30:14, 23
The Destroyer of the Gentiles: Jeremiah 4:7
The Enemy: Psalms 55:3
The Evil Man: Psalms 140:1
The Head of the Northern Army: Joel 2:20
The Head over Many Countries: Psalms 110:6
The Idol Shepherd: Zechariah 11:15, 17
The King of Babylon: Isaiah 14:11-20
The King of Princes: Hosea 8:10
The King of the North,
The Little Horn: Daniel 7:8, 8:9
The Man of the Earth:
The Merchant with Scales of Deceit: Hosea 12:7
The Mighty Man: Psalms 52:1
The Prince of Tyre: Ezekiel 28
The Prince that Shall Come: Daniel 9:26
The Profane and Wicked Prince of Israel: Ezekiel 21:25-27
The Proud Man: Habakkuk 2:5
The Rod of God’s [Yahweh’s] Anger: Isaiah 10:5
The Seed of the Serpent: Genesis 3:15
The Son of the Morning: Isaiah 14:12
The Spoiler and the Destroyer: Isaiah 15:4-5
The Vile Person: Daniel 11:21
The Violent Man: Psalms 140:11
The Wicked One: Psalms 9:17, 10:2, 4, Isaiah 11:4, Jeremiah 30:14, 23
The Wilful King: Daniel 11:36

Table 1: Opposing God’s right to rule

Introducing the Boys in the Band

Let us meet the boys in the band.

Isaiah Was a Foundational Member.

Isaiah's ministry, (about 740–680 BC), came first in the band. His prophecies were recorded and circulated early. Isaiah was the first '*score writer of the band*'. He copied the music he had been given from a spiritual vision. His writings come from a deep desire in him, and his nation, to see an answer to a promise they had held since God promised Eve:

> *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; the Serpent shall bruise your heal, and [one of those seeds] shall bruise the serpent's heel*[12].

That had remained ambiguous and vague for many years. How? When? Where? These questions had developed into a deep theological debate by those that searched the Scriptures back then. God chose Isaiah to put an end to the endless speculation that humans debate in life when they have to wait for God to fulfil a promise. One day, Isaiah was caught up in a vision and told to reveal the detailed plan as to how God would achieve his promise to Eve. He was not given the '*when*', Daniel would have to play that

12 Gen 3:15

part. But he did bring the details to the world to stop this endless speculation.

Isaiah was told to write it down, and it became the base 'song' on which the others in the band built.

> *Now go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may stand for the time to come as a witness forever.*[13]

This melodic line proclaims, God's universal holiness, a time of Judgement upon His chosen nation, the coming of Messiah who would redeem His people, and open doors to all nations, into the kingdom. Then messiah would reign forever:

> *For to us a child is born… and the government shall be upon his shoulder… of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end.*[14]

Isaiah picks up on God's promise in Genesis 3:15, which introduces an "offspring", the seed of a woman. Isaiah introduces this '*promise through seed*' language, to focus on a miraculous child. Isaiah underlines, not just any child, but an extraordinary birth, hinting at divine intervention and, implicitly, the "*seed of the woman*":

13 Isaiah 30:8 (ESV)
14 Isaiah 9:6-7

> *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.*[15]

Matthew later explicitly ties this to Jesus Christ[16].

> *Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*[17]

The Big Debate.

The next big debate rife in society was, How would God put the world to right. He would do it by sending a great conquering king to subdue all nations under one government. That was the Genesis expectation. A descendant would one day subdue the forces of evil (bruise his head), and establish a righteous dominion over all nations. Isaiah picks that up, agrees it will be so, but describes the more complicated process that will bring it about.

> *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder…*[18]

The method God chose to implement this plan was as follows:

God would choose one nation.

> *It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose*

15 Isaiah 11:1
16 Matthew 1:23.
17 Isaiah 7:14
18 Isaiah 9:6–7

you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that is why the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.[19]

God would produce a seed line through that nation.

For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.[20]

19 Deuteronomy 7:7
20 Isa 53:2 -7

God would test that nation by spreading the people out of their land and into the nations:

> *By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.*[21]

He would sacrifice one man from that nation to open up his kingdom to all the nations and peoples who had been his enemies.

> *Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors* [22].

In that same sacrifice, God would satisfy his anger, restore his chosen nation to its rightful place, and open up the kingdom to include all other nations;

> *He says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for all the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.*[23]

All this he would do to keep his promise to Eve.

21 Isa 53:8 -9
22 Isa 53:12
23 Isaiah 49:6

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.[24]

Jeremiah: The Second Guy In The Band

Jeremiah (626–580 BC), came about a century later. He quotes Isaiah copiously, showing that he had studied and absorbed Isaiah at seminary. His impatience comes from the fact that he was too young to be a priest by law, So God got round that by making him a prophet. He became the second indispensable member of the band by his enthusiasm; he worked among the people to make Isaiah's message public in places where Isaiah, (by protocol), could not go. The main points he brought to the people were:

- The nations may be raging, but God is reigning[25]
- Judah is rebelling, but God wants repentance[26]
- Judgment is coming, but after that restoration[27]
- The Holy One of Israel wants a Holy People[28]

Jeremiah is the first person in the band to set a time scale. He sketched out the four points above, but then, specifically dealing with Israel, alludes to bigger events to

24 Isa 53:10 -11
25 Isa. 5:16 &*Jeremiah 3:12-14; 4:1*
26 *Isa. 11:11-12 &Jeremiah 3:12-14; 4:1*
27 Isa. 11:11-12 & *Jeremiah 31:8-9*
28 Isaiah's favourite title (used >25 times) & Reappears in Jeremiah 50:29, showing continuity.

come for the whole world. In particular, he concentrates on his commission of explaining why judgement was coming, (because of idolatry, social injustice, and covenant unfaithfulness), telling the people punishment would last seventy years:

> *"This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."*[29]

By the end of those 70 years, the people (Israel), would:

- Dispense with idolatry and learn to be faithful,[30]
- The people could return to their land,[31]
- God would write His law on their heart[32]

Never since that time has Israel gone back to Idolatry.

Ezekiel and Jeremiah Became Mates & Corresponded

Ezekiel (593–571 BC), as a contemporary of Jeremiah probably studied Isaiah's work at the same seminary. Both lived through the destruction of Jerusalem; Ezekiel was exiled to Babylon, Jeremiah remained in Judah. They certainly share the same imagery, The watchman[33], The Shepherd leaders,[34] 'Renewed with a New Heart and Spirit'[35], etc.. That is literary evidence of a *shared*

29 Jeremiah 25:11 (ESV)
30 Jeremiah 24:5-7.
31 Jeremiah 29:10-14
32 Jeremiah 31:31-34
33 Jeremiah 6:17; Ezekiel. 3:17.
34 Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel. 34.
35 Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel. 36:26

theological discussion of some sort, possibly at Seminary. Ezekiel is said to have received reports or writings from Jerusalem before it was destroyed. They overlap by about seven years (592–586 BC).

Daniel And His God

Daniel was a young Jewish man who was taken from Jerusalem to Babylon after King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah around 605 BC. Even in exile, Daniel remained faithful to God in a foreign and pagan land. Daniel wrote his book between 536 and 530 BC, near the end of their captivity. God gifted Daniel with exceptional abilities, among these were his mathematical skills, organisational skills and his ability to interpret dreams and apply them to the reality of this world. From Nebuchadnezzar's visions of future kingdoms, Daniel foretold the rise and fall of coming empires that would happen over the next 490-years.

Daniel's prophetic gift is a particular challenge to skeptics, and atheists of all time because of the accuracy and detail of his prophecies. Academic and pseudo-researchers have employed every argument in the book to discredit Daniel. They have claimed it was written much later and after the events, which have been discredited with a simple check of history. A visit to the national museum where some of the original artefacts are on show, including the decree Cyrus himself issued. Copies of the Septuagint and the Dead Sea

Scrolls are also easily checked out.[36] Daniel recorded the prophecies in the time-line language of his day, (which are explained in the chapter on time), but it accurately culminates in the completed mission of Christ at the end of the age.

Daniel was so confident of his understanding that it stirred him to action. As a leader, he prayed in repentance for his nation.[37] In response to reading Jeremiah's prophecy, and realising the seventy years was almost up, he started planning on the strength of what he had been shown. We call that faith today! In response to that faith, God showed him something more astounding: future events for the next four-hundred-and-ninety years.[38]
He would be shown the rise and fall of the next four kingdoms; the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple;[39] the withdrawal of communication between God and mankind by prophets for four-hundred years; the birth of Messiah; the return of a prophetic voice as one crying in the wilderness;[40] The coming of *"an anointed one"* (the Messiah), the *'cutting off'* of Messiah; the destruction of the temple once again; the dispersion from the land once again. Daniel describes what Jesus later summarises as 'The time of Gentiles'[41]. Daniel also sees the end of the

36 The Septuagint is the first Greek translation of the original documents predicting events that occurred up to and including 70 AD and later. Written in the third century BC.
37 Daniel 9:4-19
38 Daniel 9:24-27
39 Under Nehemiah and Ezra
40 Which incidentally he had incorporated from Isaiah
41 Luke 21:24 They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

time allocated for gentiles, He sees Israel returning to their land during this time. He also predicts:

> *The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed … He shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end.*[42]

The Character of a True Prophet.

From an interest point of view, we see how Daniel is given these visions and prophecies, not in isolation, but in response to what he has read. He checks out what Isaiah, and the boys in the band have written, then turns it to faith. Having examined their writings, he used his organisational skills, turning it into action. To trust dreams and visions without a thorough examination of God's word is synonymous with a False Prophet.

In these days, where we are prone to pigeon hole everyone, we would categorise Daniel as a Calvinist, or Perhaps a Puritan. Daniel believed in the divine right of kings. Divine-right gives kings the right to reject who they want, choose who they want, position people where they want, to demand of people what they want, and to punish people as they want if they do not deliver what they want. He was comfortable working under Nebuchadnezzar, who shared the same view, but he also applied those values to God.

42 Daniel 2:44

It was matter of fact to Daniel that God had the right to choose a nation from among all nations, to require them to live to a given standard, and to demonstrate to the rest of the world an exemplary example of that life style. If they didn't, he had the right to punish them by removing them from their land. It was a matter of fact to Daniel that 'Might was right'! He did not complain that the nations were not playing fair or abiding by a treaty. Might can disregard treaties that have been signed by those with lesser might. Sovereignty meant just that, Sovereignty! Democracy requires us to think differently. If the government does not please the people, then the people judge the government. There is no such thing as sovereignty by consent. Sovereignty means:

> *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*[43]
>
> *Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*[44]

To Jeremiah, God has the sovereign right, not to tell the clay what he intended to make of it. If he found the clay was not pliable enough, the potter is entitled to squash it down and make something else from it. To Daniel, The law is grace. It was the grace of His God to lay out what He expected of his people in the law, and to punish them if they did not live up to it. That literalistic, unquestioning character in Daniel (perhaps what we would today bundle under the label 'autistic'), enabled God to reveal the future

43 Romans 9:15
44 Romans 9: 13

to Daniel. If God had given the message to Moses, he would have argued with God saying, ‘OK, mess with my people, then you cut me off too’! If God had give this message to Abraham, he would have gone into bargaining mode saying, ‘What if...50...40...10...1?' Daniel never questions God, he hears from God, fasts and prays for forgiveness on behalf of the people. No wonder no one else could see the vision.

> *Only I, Daniel, saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but a great terror fell upon them, and they ran and hid themselves.*[45]

If nothing else, this must surely show the value of diversity of character, in the body of the church.

Daniel Read Jeremiah Directly.

Daniel was an avid reader of the works of Jeremiah. He says so himself:

> *I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*[46]

Daniel, living in Babylon at the end of the seventy captive years, read the prophecy, prayed over them, interpreted the time scale literarily, and took practical planning steps in

45 Daniel 10: 7
46 Daniel 9:2

faith as a leader of Israel. Jeremiah's prophetic books were literal history, so Daniel's chronological expansion of the "Plot", must also be literal. There was no hidden wisdom. That would defeat the whole point of God revealing his plans to mankind. Daniel read Jeremiah's writings and understood that Israel's appointed captivity time of seventy years was almost complete:

> *I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*[47]

Backing Boys: Micah, Obadiah and Amos

Micah, Obadiah and Amos were backing boys in the band. If it had been a secular band, there most certainly would have been a copyright dispute. Isaiah 2:2 to 4 parallels Micah 4:1 to 3, so either Micah drew from Isaiah, Isaiah from Micah, or both drew from a common source like the Holy Spirit. Again, Isaiah 13 to14 echoes Obadiah's judgment on the nations. But then again, Isaiah 1:11 to 17 sounds like Amos 5:21 to 24, both condemn the people for hypocritical worship while neglecting justice and righteousness.

Close Harmony in the Band

> *The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations.*[48]

47 Daniel 9:2 (ESV)
48 Psalm 33:11

> *For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.*[49]

In this introduction to the band we should not overlook the dynamic of the band. The prophets harmonise with each other. In the band, Isaiah lays out the main score of the whole piece, (the life and times of the coming King), Jeremiah writes the overture, setting a sombre mood, (seventy years of corrective captivity), Ezekiel changed the mood and tempo, promising reconciliation and release, and finally, Daniel developed the full score in three movements; (God's timeline from exile to return, from return to the cut off of Messiah and from Messiah to climax with the King). They acknowledged each other as they wrote the score.

> *Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord GOD.*[50]

Ezekiel was already in Babylon. Daniel was a statesman serving in the very empire Ezekiel was warning about. Thus, Ezekiel was aware of Daniel's faith and reputation. That indicates, at minimum, that news of Daniel's life and integrity had reached the Jewish communities beyond Babylon.

---

49 Amos 3:7
50 Ezekiel 14:14 (ESV)

Although their lives and messages overlapped, we must remember Daniel served in the royal court and was bound by its protocol, while Ezekiel lived among the exiles, serving as a priest and prophet to ordinary people. The Babylonians didn't freely allow movement between these groups. It's unlikely that Ezekiel, a captive among the common exiles, would have had access to a high official like Daniel. Likewise, Daniel's official duties might have prevented such personal contact. Even if they never met, they spoke with one heart and one spirit. Both proclaimed that God is sovereign over the empires and that His kingdom will endure forever[51]. Both received visions of God's glory; Daniel in the court, Ezekiel by the river Chebar [52].

51 1 *"He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings."* Daniel 2:21 (ESV) 2*"And you shall know that I am the LORD."* Ezekiel 6:7 (ESV)

52 Ezekiel 1; Daniel 7

Chapter 2: Defining Time

I blame the Babylonians! They were brilliant mathematicians and star gazers, but when it came to times and seasons, they based half their calculations on the Solar cycle, and half on the Lunar cycle. As these two cycles rarely coincide, this has caused confusion even down to today. They sought to apply the mathematical principle by finding the lowest common denominator which gave them a circle divided with 360 divisions.

Daniel's *'weeks'* comes from his phraseology of 'sixty-nine-sevens. It is mysterious to us, but in his day it was common talk. Daniel, used a 360 day year, totally unaware that later, a year would be re-defined more accurately as 365 ¼ Days. Trying to combine Lunar and Solar calendar systems was a headache. By the time the New Testament book Revelation was written, the Babylonians, Greeks and Romans had each rearranged the calender. So John, in his literature, uses three labels for the year interchanging the Greek and Hebrew methods. He refers to 'a time-two-times-and-a-half-time', when he means $3^{1/2}$ years under the old standard of a 360 day year. He qualifies it as 1260 days or 42 months.

Daniel's prophecy is written mainly in Hebrew[53]. Literally, his phrase reads as *'seven-sevens'*. The '*sevens*' can be

53 Many other parts were written in Aramaic.

anything. In English it might be translated as: score, decades, seasons or new moons for all we know. It is defined and understood by the context. English translators thought they were being helpful to the English speaking world by calling it seven-weeks. But it is really defined by a Babylonian time scale, in which Lunar and Solar time-scale gradually get out of sync. They got over this by resetting them every fiftieth-year. This year became known as Jubilee year. In Jubilee year, Israeli people reset everything. All contracts end, tenancies return to the owners, debts are written off, and slaves are set free.

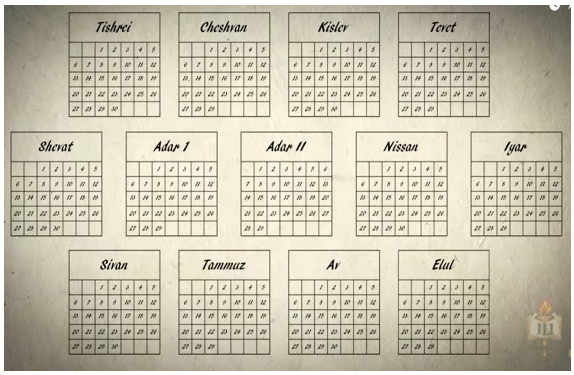
The first seven-sevens mentioned by Daniel equals 49 years, or one Jubilee cycle. This was the time prophesied, to mark the first stage point, when the city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt.

The next sixty-two weeks (434 years), included, what has become known as ‘four-hundred years of silence’; it was named this because no prophet spoke to the nation until Messiah’s arrival. This second time marker, predicting the time by which Messiah had come, Messiah had entered into Jerusalem (on an ass), Messiah had been cut off from the land of the living, (the cross). A short time after that, the Jews would become refugees again and the great temple would be destroyed. That marked the end of this part of the prophecy.

The end of this '*69th week*' would stop the clock. A period of unknown length would follow, (which we now call 'the time of the Gentiles'). Because Daniel's prophecy is directed at the Children-of-Israel in particular, time is paused, while the time-of-gentiles is completed. Then the time will start the 70th week. The trigger to restart the clock will be signalled when, a world leader of future time, will establish a seven-year contract, or covenant for peace among the middle-east nations, only to renege on it half way through.

All that seems quaint until, in a moment, we will expound and explain other events in scripture which give credibility and reason to the prophecy. We stay here for the moment though, with a closer look at time.

Month



The Jewish Calender was defined by the Lunar cycle. Every 28 days the Sanhedrin would call together a group of witnesses and ask if they had seen the first crescent moon. If they had, the previous month would be declared finished on the previous day, and that day would be declared the first of the new month. If

they had not seen a new moon, that day would be declared the last day of the month, the following day would be declared the first of the new month. As a complete cycle of the moon is twenty-nine and a quarter days, the month would sometimes have 29 days and sometimes 30 days.

Year

The solar year, on the other hand, is 365¼ Years. So the difference between a lunar year, and a solar year had a remainder of 11 days. This caused a problem because the Torah declares that Passover, (the first of Jewish feasts marking the beginning of year cycle), must be in the spring. If it was not to creep into another season these two markers had to be reconciled. To overcome this, The Sanhedrin inserted an occasional extra month into one year in four. This became a leap year, or ‘pregnant year’. This system was disrupted when Rome overruled the Jews in the forth century^{AD}. Rabi Helal anticipated this by setting up a fixed Jewish calender (shown above). Jews today use this calender all over the world to ensure they celebrate Passover on the same day each year. That calender is also the basis for biblical interpretation and we can go wildly wrong when we inadvertently read scripture within our modern time and calender scale.

Day

'Yom' is the Hebrew word for day in Scripture. It is not a set period of time, it simply marks the progression of a process from its declaration to its finish. Early Hebrew time, (like a computer process timer bar), anticipates how long a process will take, adjusting up or down while processing. It can be paused at anytime, but always displays zero when it is complete. To define a day (yom) in Genesis, for example, is to declare its commencement *(Evening),* to declare its progression *(morning)* and its ending (*the first day).*

To get into the Hebrew understanding, we can use the creation of the sun in Genesis one as an example:

God described what was in his mind, to create light. He declared this intention to create it in verse three. Creation, in early Hebrew thought, is closer to our word invent, which contains three stages. It begins:

(1) as a concept or idea, moves through
(2) expression by word or drawings, onto
(3) to the manufacture or making.

Verse three declares the project. Verses four-to-seven describes the progression or process.

There is a gap until verse fourteen, when God completed and established the sun and moon. (We will deal with the

gap in time in a moment). But the process from concept to completion is said to be a day *(yom).*

Hour

The flexibility built into the measure of Day, is carried into the hour. The hour was built on the watch, (as in guard-watch). The day and night guard were based on four battalion watches, of roughly three hourly shifts. These were not precise. If the battalion overslept, the hour was delayed. The terms ‘watch’ and ‘hour’ are interchanged in scripture. The sum total of: first, second, third, and forth hour of the day and the same throughout the night added up to one day.

Week

A week in Hebrew is seven days starting in the first day of the week which is our Sunday and ending with the Sabaoth. Ancient Sabaoth began at sundown but modern Sabbath begins at 6:00 pm on Friday. A week was also called a numerical seven. What is often translated as seven-weeks in our English Bible is written as *‘seven-sevens’* in the Hebrew. Seven sevens can be days, weeks or years as discerned from the context of the phrase.

Jubilee Year

Daniel’s prophecy follows a pattern of ten 49-year Jubilee cycles: To Hebrew minds this mirrors the story of Genesis

when God rested on the 7th day. The first ‘week’ (49 years, or one Jubilee cycle), was allotted as the time-up for the rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. Then followed by sixty-two ‘weeks’ (434 years), would mark the end of the period before the promised Messiah’s arrival. Incidentally this contained what Christians call ‘four-hundred years of silence’, between when the boys in the band stopped prophesying and John-the-Baptist started again. In between, no other prophet spoke.

The 69th year began when the angels announced the birth of Messiah to Mary, continued through the time He carried out His ministry and was cut off from the living, ending, right on time, in AD ^{70} when the temple is destroyed. This happened in a jubilee year, or reset year. The land is to be rested, debts cancelled, property and land returned to the rightful owner.

Rest Day / Gap Year

It is common in Scripture to have pauses in sequence event in scripture. Most of these are implied, some are pronounced, but many are passed over as part and parcel of the same event. Peter, as an example of a very impatient person, was not interested in the detail or mundane. When Peter dictated his record of events for Mark, we see his impatience in the frequent use of the word immediately. For Peter’s ‘Immediately’, we can read, ‘*the next interesting event after this...'.*

Already we have mentioned several gaps in Genesis chapter-one, recognised by Hebrew readers as pauses between the announcement of intention (*God Said*) and the establishment announcement (*God saw it was good*), the positioning and commissioning of that creation (e.g. *'Separated light from darkness'* and *'to rule by day'*). Every time we read the phase *'And the evening and morning were…'*, we have a time pause before the next event.

From Daniel 9: 26:

> *And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.*[54] *Then the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. This will come like a flood, and to the end there shall be war.*

Isaiah also prophesies the same event, running two halves of a Prophecy together in Isaiah 9:6-7:

> *Unto us a child is born unto us a son is given, [**gap]** and the government shall be upon his shoulders.*

We do the same today when we talk of a football match where the break is understood as part of the match. The match is not over until the two teams break to change sides halfway through. The break is understood. It is essential to the fairness of the game, those that had the wind and other

54 *[gap implied by the word then]*

elements against them in the first half have it behind them in the second.

A clearer example of a time gap understood by Jesus, can be seen when he went into the synagogue of Nazareth to preach. Jesus announced that '*half-time break*', by talking about the first half of his ministry, stopping at a comma, and leaving out the second part which is yet to come:

> *He was given the book of Isaiah the prophet. He opened it and read, "The Lord's Spirit has come to me, because he has chosen me to tell the good news to the poor. The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, 'This is the year the Lord has chosen'." Jesus closed the book, then handed it back to the man in charge and sat down. Everyone in the meeting place looked straight at Jesus. Then Jesus said to them, "What you have just heard me read has come true today."* [55]

What Jesus left out, '*and the day of Vengeance of Our Lord*', belonged to the second half. Before the final judgement can be made, the Gospel must first go out to all nations. To those that heard him preach that day, they thought it would be another sermon about Jubilee year, but Jesus applied the passage to himself, He was announcing his mission within the context of Daniel's prophetic vision, was about to begin.

55 Isaiah 61

Much misguided theology around these deliberate pauses has grown up into dubious doctrine. Some may say various verses of scripture refer to God's chosen people Israel, some saying they mean the church; some might say they are symbolic, some might say they are literal. Pauses in scripture are there for a purpose. Misread pauses divide the church on doctrine. If we see nothing else in this chapter on time, one thing stands out. There are two time-bases woven through scripture, ours and heaven's. These are as different as Lunar and Solar time bases, they coincide perfectly in God's mathematics and are not always visible from earth. That is why it is important to look for the pauses in scripture.

Taken overall, there is no definitive way to splice time as Daniel understood and expressed it, but Daniel's prophecies are certainly accurate within any margin of error caused by history's changing method of keeping time. More, it is worthwhile to recognise different ways of reconciling time, especially as seen by Heavenly and Earthly kingdoms.

Chapter 3: The Battle Behind The Scenes

For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel is his own possession.[56]

For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you Israel, to be a people for his special purposes. He chose you out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the fewest of all peoples. Nor did he choose you because you are more lovable than any other nation, no, it is because the Lord is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that is why the Lord brought you out from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. With a mighty hand He redeemed you from the house of slavery[57].

Genesis 3: Enemies in the Making

When God called Abraham out of Ur and made a covenant with him, He promised:

I will bless those who bless you, and him who dis-honours you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed[58].

From that moment, the descendants of Abraham were set apart as the genetic line that would eventually provide 'the seed' to fulfil the promise given to Eve.

56 Psalm 135:4
57 Deuteronomy 7:6-8
58 Genesis 12:3

> *I will make you and the woman enemies to each other. Your children and her children will be enemies. You will crush her child's foot, but he will crush your head.*[59]

This verse is fundamental to the plot of Scripture, but English translators have made it sound like a passing comment. So I must divert for a while to see the Hebrew understanding.

Six Statements that Determine Satan's Strategy

If nothing else, Genesis-three reveals the spiritual battle behind the scenes and the need for redemption. The whole chapter is in the context of a rebellion, God is not just lamenting the physical state of sweat and weeds (as the English translations suggests), God is stating the spiritual purpose of man within the longer-term goal of eternity. God is not addressing a snake or a person; he is addressing the spiritual power behind an event.

> *The angels just robed themselves of their own free will in order to partake of their mischievous Activities on earth. God will hold them in that state until the judgment of the great day*[60].
>
> *And angels that kept not their own state, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day*[61].

59 Gen 3:15
60 In Jude 6
61 Jude 1:6

This chapter makes six statements that will determine Satan's strategy for the battle.

1: Satan will be prince over earth for a time

The first part of this verse is a statement of fact. Adam and Eve had been singled out as a new species of creation, to live in a world (garden), under the headship of God, who envisioned: (a) harmony between nature and mankind; (b) harmony between God and mankind, and; (c) harmony between mankind and mankind. That could no longer be. God conceded to Satan the headship of the world for a season because the pair had conceded it to him. Satan, from here on in, claimed the title *'the prince of this world'*. While imprisoned in this world, he seeks to re-ascend into the heavens in an attempt to take it and be free.

> *You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned as the chief, where appointments are made. From there I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.*[62]
>
> *Following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience…* [63]
>
> *Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.*[64]

62 Isaiah 14:13
63 Ephesians 2:2 …
64 John 12:31

The whole world lies in the power of the evil one.[65]

2: Satan will have strong, but limited powers to oppose God's Plan.

I will make you and the woman enemies to each other. Your children and her children will be enemies. You will crush her child's foot, but he will crush your head.[66]

In the second part of that verse, the Hebrew verb *shûph* is used in both clauses. It is the *same* word, which can be translated in any degree of intensity from '*crush'*, to '*strike a blow.* So the context sets the degree for each. So, the *"head"* and the *"heel"*, contrast the degree of severity. The Torah suggests:

"The 'seed of the woman' refers to the righteous descendants of Israel, while the 'seed of the serpent' represents the wicked. The 'bruising of the head' symbolises the ultimate defeat of evil, while the 'bruising of the heel' refers to temporary setbacks suffered by the righteous."

3: Satan has a limited time

Then the LORD God said to the snake, "You will be punished for this; you alone of all the beasts must bear this curse: From now on you will crawl on your belly, and you will have to eat dust as long ***as you live****.*[67]

God is addressing Satan, not a snake. Satan will have dominion over the descendants of Eve until one of her offspring retakes that dominion from him. That offspring

65 John 5:19 …
66 Gen 3:15
67 Gen 3:14

will crush Satan's head (take the dominion from him). That makes Satan aware that he has a limited time.

4: Satan's powers will be set to different levels at different times and seasons.

> *The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field.*[68]

Hebrew word translated curse, means 'to be bound or barred, hemmed in with obstacles' or rendered powerless to resist. That will become poignant when we consider Satan being released from his chains for a season later in our narrative.

5: People and Nations will play a large part in limiting Satan's activities

> *Your life will be a constant battle against this curse until you return to the ground,*[69]

Man will share the responsibility of limiting Satan's activities by limiting what he can sow. Dominion is not the same as allegiance. Satan can interfere with the affairs of this world, but humans retain the right and responsibility as to where they place their allegiance. The '*sweat and toil'* is not a limited reference to the result of physical work; it refers to human resistance to Satan's destructive reign. If Satan cannot persuade mankind to co-operate, he cannot carry out his objective.

68 Gen 3:14
69 Gen 3:18

6: Everyone Born into This World Enlists into the Battle.

Adam named his wife Eve. He gave her this name because Eve would be the mother of everyone who ever lived.[70]

Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the fields from which he was taken.[71]

Being sent out of the garden is not about punishment because of what has happened; it is a recommissioning of God's original intention.

> *God blessed them and said to them, Have many children. Fill the earth and take control of it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the air. Rule over every living thing that moves on the earth.* [72]

That includes the snake (Satan), and the beasts of the fields! It is a recommissioning of God's intention that humans should be His ambassadors and His stewards of the earth, and its resources. Human beings are held accountable for the state of the world. The initial temptation was not about an apple; it was about the appetite to consume. It was not about the eating of an apple, it was about choice. It was about distinguishing, protecting and guarding, rather than appetite, (consuming), and the freedom not to satisfy every desire.

---

70 *Gen 3:20*
71 *Gen 3:23*
72 Gen 1:28

That is probably why the ‘straw man’ in the story is the ‘apple’. It is not in the story, it is put there in the retelling, to make the decision and the action seem trivial.

The Battle on Earth Begins

The Battle on Earth Begins

Behind this is Satan’s motivation of hatred towards God’s redemptive plan. It is Satan’s desire to protect his egotistical ambition to take the throne from God. It is this same motivation that travels through time. It is revealed in the form of a human’s cooperation or assigning allegiance to Satan and his ambition. Like everything that exists in this world, spiritual motivation can only achieve its goal if it can control nature. Greed is a spiritual force that can only achieve its aim if it persuades nature (humans in particular) to grab, steal or take spoils by desire and without need. A tyrant can only have control of a nation if he can persuade enough people to surrender to his aims and ideals. A tyrant cannot be a tyrant if he has nobody’s allegiance. Pharaoh’s oppression of Israel is revealing

> *“Who is this LORD and why should I obey him?” the king replied. “I refuse to let you and your people go!”*[73]
>
> *Zedekiah disobeyed the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done… sending his entire army to attack Jerusalem.*[74]

73 Exodus 5:2
74 2Ki 24:19

> *And when Haman found out that Mordecai was a Jew, he knew that killing only Mordecai was not enough. Every Jew in the whole kingdom had to be killed.*[75]

Later in time, persecution for refusing to worship pagan gods under the Romans, falsely blaming Christians for the plagues, and forced containment into ghettos under middle age church; Wilhelm Marr coining of the term '*anti-Semitism.';* The Holocaust during the last century – these are all revelations of one and the same spirit driving people toward a goal. These were not individual acts of bigotry, they reflected spiritual efforts to thwart God's eternal plan to bring salvation through Israel's Messiah, that began when the battle lines were drawn at the beginning of time.

Ishmael's conception began a conflict between Israel and Ishmael. Out of a human desire to fulfil a desire, Abraham made human plans. Out of this human plan, these nations became enemies. The wrestling in Rebecca's womb demonstrated a conflict that was innate before these children were born. It picked up a spiritual conflict and played it out between two nations at conception. Esau's hatred of Israel is driven by rebellion against God. He did not like God's decision to choose his brother. This grew in toxicity under Esau's descendant, Edom. Esau and Jacob were reconciled in Genesis-chapter-thirty-three, but a spiritual hatred embedded in the descendants of Esau raises its head whenever the opportunity arises. These two enemy

75 Est 3:6

sources will play different roles in the history of Israel to this day.

> *Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger.*[76]

Jacob (the younger) became the father of *Israel*. Esau (the older) became the father of *Edom*. Though the twins were brothers, the nations they produced became bitter enemies.

> *Esau harboured a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him.*[77]

Just as Scripture singled out Israel as the nation to bring salvation, Edom is singled out as the nation that seeks to destroy that line of salvation by wiping them out. Embedded in spiritual, and the genetic line of Edom, bitterness grew into a national hostile trait, raising its head in history whenever the opportunity allowed. When Israel came out of Egypt, Edom refused them passage through their land, hoping their enemies would wipe them out.[78]

> *But the king of Edom answered, "You may not travel through our land. If you try to travel through our land, we will come and fight you with swords also.* [79]

76 Genesis 25:23
77 Genesis 27:41
78 Numbers 20:14–21.
79 Numbers 20:18

> *LORD, be sure to punish the Edomites for what they did when Jerusalem was captured. They shouted, "Destroy its buildings! Pull them down to the ground![80]*

Later, the Edomites allied with Israel's enemies, hoping to take the spoils when any came against them:

> *You should not have laughed at your brother's trouble. You should not have been happy when they destroyed Judah. You should not have bragged at the time of their trouble. You should not have entered the city gate of my people and ransacked it.[81]*
>
> *Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, shame shall cover you, and you shall be cut off forever.[82]*

Paul explains that God's choice of Jacob over Esau was not favouritism, but a fulfilment of a promise He had made to Abraham.

> *Though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue… she was told, 'The older will serve the younger'. As it is written, 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated'.[83]*

What is sometimes called, '*Edom's genetic hatred'* is best understood as spiritual hostility 'piggybacked' on sin and pride and carried down a line by genetics.

---

80 Psalm 137:7
81 Obadiah 1:12
82 *Obadiah 1:10 ff*
83 *Romans 9:11–13*

> *The pride of your heart has deceived you… though you soar aloft like the eagle… from there I will bring you down.* [84]

Mainly, Edom's descendant's territory settled in modern southern Jordan. It included Seir, Bozrah, and Sela (modern-day Petra).[85] History's list of Edomites that took every opportunity to try to wipe out the Messianic line, is convincing evidence enough to show the spiritual opposition behind this tribe:

Who is an Edomite?

Hadad the Edomite emerged as the key figure opposed to Israel in David's reign, instigating the conflicts between Israel and Edom. His motivation is rooted in their shared ancestry through Esau.

Timna the mother of Amalek sowed hatred into Amalek so much that it was recorded:

> *The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.*[86]

The Amalekites, through their relationship to Edom, became another of Israel's most bitter enemies. Through the scriptures we can trace their motivational intention to conquer and rule over Israel. They tried but never succeeded:

84 Obadiah 1:3–4
85 Genesis 36:31
86 Exodus 17:16

- In Exodus 17, Amalek ambushed Israel but were defeated by Joshua, and cursed by God.
- In Judges 3, they allied with Moab but were defeated by Ehud.
- In Judges 6–7 they allied with Midian but were defeated by Gideon.
- In 1 Samuel 15, They joined Saul's campaign but were crushed and Agag was slain by Samuel.
- In 1 Samuel 30, they joined the raid at Ziklag, David annihilated them.
- In 1 Chronicles 4, the Simeonites leave only a remnant of them.
- In Esther 3, The Edomite, Haman rises in power and plots to extinguish the Jewish nation but the Jews are delivered and Haman executed.
- In 47 BC, Julius Caesar promoted the Edomite Idummean over the Jewish people, Herod son of Antiper was an Edomite and appointed king over Israel in 37 BC. The following three Herods in the New Testament were all Edomites. One of them killed all the babies in an attempt destroy Christ; another Herod murdered John the Baptist[87]; The third killed James, the brother of John[88]. That was the end of Edomite leaders as they left no recorded descendants.

The struggle between the Israelis and the Arabs today is seen as a continuation of this same battle that started in Genesis-twenty-five. But we must be cautious with our labels. Not all Arabs are descendants of Edom and not all Arabs are enemies of Israel. The struggle remains between Edom and Israel.

87 Matthew 2:16
88 Acts 12

In the fall of Jerusalem in seventy^{AD}, because of the turmoil between the Idumea's (Edomites) and the Orthodox Jews, 20,000 of Dominion's Infantry slaughtered many of the Orthodox Jews. Later in history, Bar Cockbar captured Jerusalem and wanted to rename it Idumea, (a name for Edom), Maps up until 135^{AD} carry that name.

I think we have enough examples here, to show these are not random attacks on a nation but a concerted spiritual effort against a God who chose the Children of Israel for his own.

In theological understanding, battles on earth express a spiritual battle that began in heaven. Many spiritual powers were cast down and confined to the earth. Theologians talk of spiritual battles to explain motivation behind actual battles for power being fought on earth. These are not always fought on battlefields, they only end up there after much scheming and planning, motived in the minds and ambitions of people. Hence the real battles on earth are for the hearts and minds of followers by leaders. Scripture has acknowledged this since the days of Babel, when the experiment of people to unite under one world leader crumbled because people could agree with the ideas and aims of one leader. When people of strong conviction disagree, they divide the people. As Jesus himself said, *'A kingdom divided cannot stand'*.

All this is carried on in the mental and spiritual dimension of human beings As people became nations, and nations produced leaders, among them some leaders carried the motivation to become the one-world-leader. There has been a battle for dominance by territories on earth, from at least the time of Babel. One dear skeptical, scientific friend of mine has difficulty imagining spiritual beings, (he can only go so far as to say there is a motivational drive in people for power), which leads to wars and rumours of wars. Putting aside the theological pictures that make it easier to understand what is going on, we can agree that motivation is in at the base of the problem. Even if the debate as to where motivation comes from continues, we can agree that motivation comes from the spiritual drive which is placed within humans. At the base of Daniel, Ezekiel, and the other boys in the band lies an understanding that there is a battle for world dominance going on; history shows it. Scripture not only gives a historical record of this motivational drive, but also gives us insight as to how this battle is not limited to the life of one person but carries on over the centuries.

Antisemitism, for example, is not just an individual's choice, it has been there since God chose the descendants of Jacob to carry the genetic line of Messiah. The story reveals itself in Babylon when all the people of the known world got together to say let us live as one people and

build a great city, and we can ignore God to make ourselves gods.

> *Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.*[89]

God saw that, as a direct challenge to his command to spread out and replenish the earth,

> *And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*[90]

God dispersed them anyway, dividing them by opinions and language. They could not agree under one leader, and could not express their views due to the might behind that leader.

> *"They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator."*[91]
>
> *"They sacrificed to demons that were no gods, to gods they had never known.*[92]

The Lord told Israel clearly that His choices were not based on the power or virtue of a people, but on His love and covenant faithfulness:

89 Gen 11:4
90 Gen 1:28
91 Romans 1:25
92 Deuteronomy 32:17

> *But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.*[93]

The purpose of God's election of Israel gave him the ancestral (genetic) means to fulfil His promise to Eve. An offspring of human species would eventually stand as ruler of the world on God's behalf.

> *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*[94]

He would reveal himself to the world and genetically bring forth the Messiah through this nation.

> *Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonours you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*[95]

The Nations Choose Their Own Allegiance.

> *When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage*[96].

93 Isa 43:1
94 Gen 3:15
95 Gen 12:1
96 Deuteronomy 32:8–9 the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint—read "sons of God" as "divine beings."

The battle lines are drawn, not by nation, but between those motivated to look to God to fulfil his promise and those that reject outright, God's right to have a say in the running their lives or this world. Nationally, the world divides into regions of the world that will be dominated by strong leaders. Those leaders will impose or condition the people under their control. Spiritually there will be individuals of every race and nation that will give allegiance to God. This will be seen by leaders as undermining the direction of the nation and will bring persecution.

> *"Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name.*[97]

There are many mentioned in scripture who are not descended from Jacob (*renamed Israel*), not least Job:

> *I wish someone would carve into a rock so that they would see forever. I know that there is someone to defend me and that he lives! And later, he will stand here on earth and defend me. After I leave my body and my skin has been destroyed, I know I will still see God. I will see him with my own eyes. I myself, not someone else, will see God. And I cannot tell you how excited that makes me feel!*[98]

So now we see the nature of mankind's battle. Everybody born into this world enters a fight to keep his or her own

97 Matthew 24:9
98 Job 19:23

person. People battle psychologically against: political, national, peer pressure, and spiritual powers that seek allegiance. It is seen today as a battle for mind and soul against moral or ethical standards, truth, freedom, and the right to eat any apple of choosing. Basic to this, Humans must determine which spiritual influencing powers to surrender to, and which to fight. Human beings have no small battles through their lives and need some greater help from outside the self.

Chapter 4: Identifying Nations and People

We are open to all sorts of strange ideas and interpretations if we stray from biblical principles. At various time in history the Antichrist has been identified as the Pope, the Catholic Church, Islam, America … (insert your own ideas here). Another strange idea, is that somehow God has mislaid ten of his tribes. They turn up, sometimes here, sometimes there, depending to whom the latest revelation is given. Another great mystery, (especially amongst American Evangelicals) is America. America is not mentioned in scripture by name. Perhaps, (according to some) they are to be raptured leaving the rest of us to go through the tribulation alone. Or perhaps, (according to others), when the end times come, America is no longer. Countries have shuffled names and borders, realigning to suit the latest political fad. The scriptures have a fundamental principle for identifying nations. It lists them by their ancestors, which cannot change. It gives a definitive list of the ancestral names that it will use throughout scripture, listing them in Genesis ten. America may not be listed by name but the ancestors they descended from are there in Genesis ten because the whole earth was replenished from Noah's descendants after they came out of the Ark.

Figure 1: Replenishing the Earth

Who Are My Ancestors?

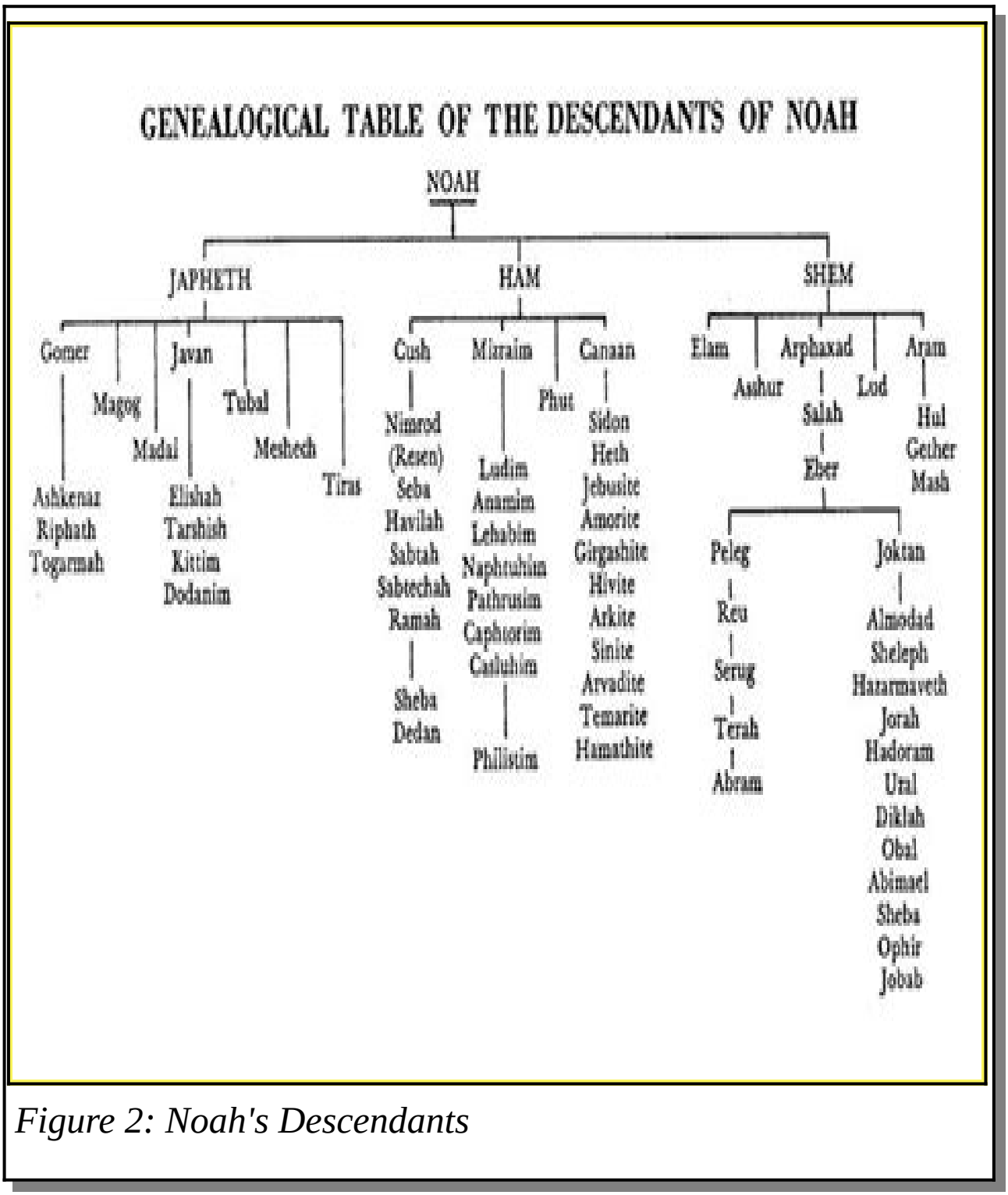


Figure 2: Noah's Descendants

Where Are They Now?

Bible Name	Settled	1st Gen	2nd Gen	3rd Gen
Magog	Ukraine, Russia and Northern territories, Scythians, Ukraine	Japheth		
Gomer	Germany			
Magod	Ukraine, Russia and Northern territories			
Madai	Persia			
Javan	Greece			
Tubal	Southern Russia			
Meshech	Russia			
Tiras	Italy			
Ashkanaz	Germany	Japheth	Gomer	
Riphath	Europe , Paphlagonians			
Togamah	Armenia, Turkey, Turkestan			
Elishah	Spain		Javan	
Tarshish	Spain			
Kittim	Cyprus			
Dodanim	Rhodes			
Cush	Ethiopia	Ham		
Mizariam	Egypt			
Phut	Africa			
Cannan	Eastern shores Mediterranean Sea			

Figure 3: Where are they now? (a)

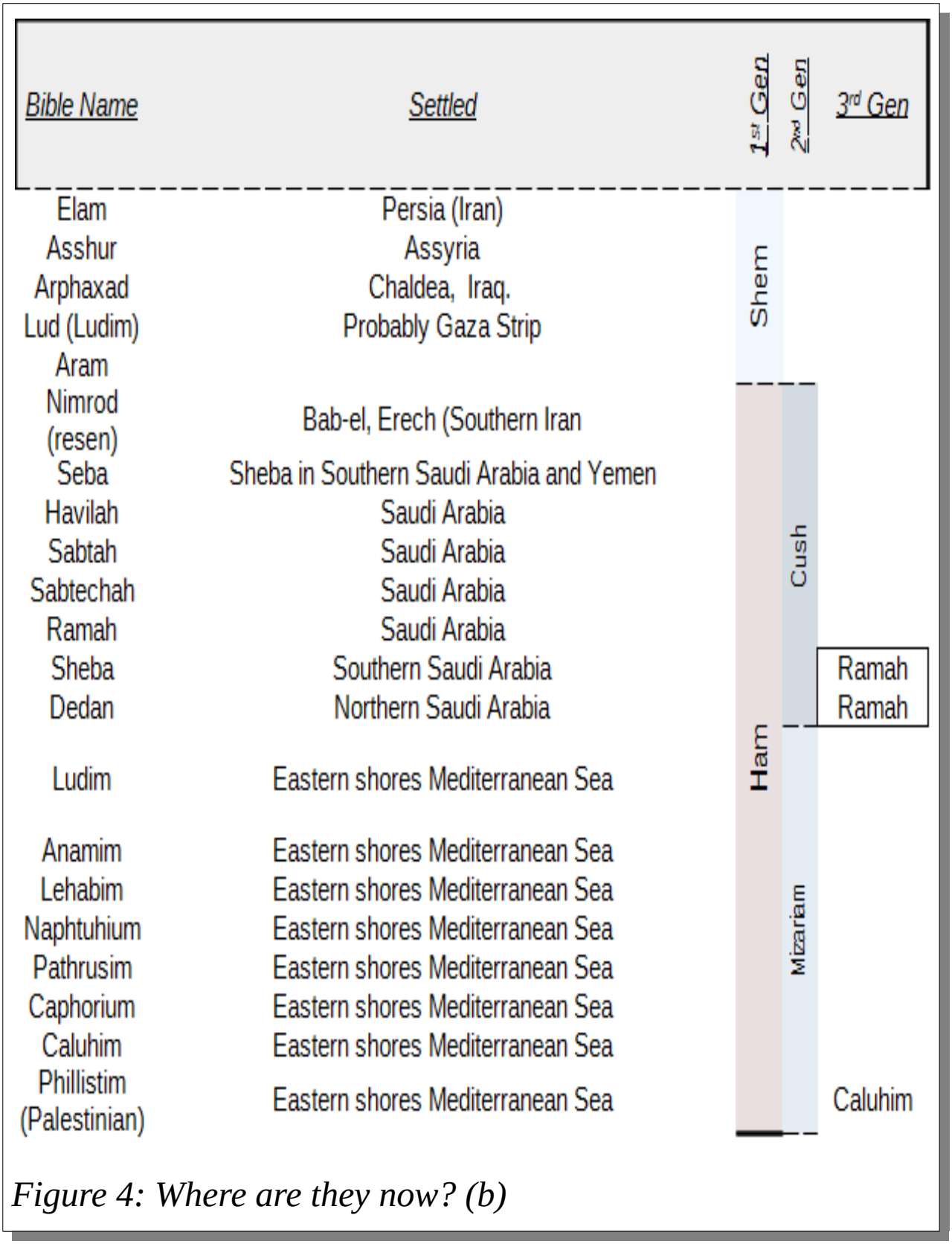


Figure 4: Where are they now? (b)

Bible Name	Settled	1st Gen	2nd Gen	3rd Gen
Sidon	Eastern shores Mediterranean Sea		Canaan	
Heth (Hittites)	Anatolia Turkey			
Jebusite	Hill Country of Cannan			
Amorite	Hill Country of Cannan			
Girshamite	Golan Heights			
Hivite	Central Canaan			
Arkite	between Tripoli and Tartus modern Syria.			
Sinite (Sin)	Northern Israel			
Arvadite	northwestern coast of modern-day Syria			
Temarite	near Arka, north of Tripoli, Lebanon			
Hamathite	between Phoenicia and Aram (Syria)			
Salah	Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, in southern Mesopotamia (Babylon)	Shem	Arphaxad	
Eber	Mesopotamia, between Ur and Haran			
Peleg	Between Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (Iraq)		Eber	
Reu	Between Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (Iraq)			
Serug	Mesopotamia			
Terah	Ur then Terah in fertile Crescent			
Abraham	Ur then Terah in fertile Crescent			
Jokatan	Yemen,			Jokatan

Figure 6: Where are they now? (c)

Bible Name	Settled	1st Gen	2nd Gen	3rd Gen
Almodad	Yemen,	Shem	Eber	Jokatan
Sheleph	Yemen,			
Hazarmaved	southern Arabia			
Jorah	southern Arabian Peninsula			
Hadoram	southern Arabian Peninsula			
Uzal	southern Arabian Peninsula			
Dikolah	southwestern edge of Arabia			
Obal	southwestern edge of Arabia			
Abimael	Yemeni highlands			
Sheba	Arabian Peninsula			
Ophir	Arabian Peninsula			
Jobab	Arabian Peninsula			

Figure 7: Where are they Now? (d)

Another great game people love to play regarding nations is, Spot Babylon. It is often said that Babylon Fell in 539^{BC} when it was conquered without a battle. But that cannot be so because the prophecy states clearly that it will be destroyed and never rise again. Babylon was conquered and later became Alexander's capital city. It has been the centre of many atrocities down through the centuries, and is even now being rebuilt again.

There are two groups of prophecies about Babylon. One tells of the fall of Babylon, the other talks of its final destruction. The destruction of Babylon predicted by both Jeremiah and Isaiah, is about a time it will fall and never be inhabited again; It will be totally destroyed and not even the bricks will be saved. Like Sodom and Gomorrah it will be totally destroyed and lay forever under the dead sea! There is a clear distinction in scripture between the physical place Babylon and the spiritual seat of evil in the world. The seat, (or the headquarters of evil spiritual power in the world), is said to move throughout Scripture.

> *Now the angel who was there to explain the visions came over and said, "Look up and tell me what you see coming." "I don't know what it is," was my reply. It's a big basket, he said. "And it shows what everyone in the land has in mind." The lead cover of the basket was opened, and in the basket was a woman."This woman represents evil," the angel explained. Then he threw her back into the basket and slammed the heavy cover down*

tight. Right after this I saw two women coming through the sky like storks with wings outstretched in the wind. Suddenly they lifted the basket into the air, and I asked the angel, "Where are they taking the basket?" "To Babylonia," he answered, "where they will build a house for the basket and set it down inside." [99]

This passage is a picture, a vision given to Zechariah, to understand the nature of evil. It started in Babylon from where the bible says, all wickedness emerged.[100] The seat of evil (by which I take it to mean the central spiritual influence and encouragement of rebellion against God and his people around the world), is being picked up and carried to various places as history progresses. By the time of John, it is centred in Pergamon. John tells us this in his vision to the churches in Revelation. John declares Pergamon to be the centre of wickedness in the world[101]. Later, the early church believed pagan Rome had moved it to its government centre.[102]

In the following passage, The seat of evil is being carried to the land of Sheena, from where it is being prepared ready to establish it as the seat of evil in the world. Sheena is the valley in which Babylon sits. In this prophecy, the

99 Zechariah 5:5 ff

100 "Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth'." — *Genesis 11:4*

101 Revelation chapters 1 -3

102 *Babylon* was probably symbolic for Rome. Like Rome, Babylon was a great city, the capital of an empire. Babylon held sway over much of the ancient Near East in the 500s BC. As a great city and the capital of the empire that burned Jerusalem and took many captive Israelites back to the city, Babylon was regarded as the power centre of a world hostile to God's people. For this reason, the book of Revelation uses "Babylon" as a metaphor or code word for Rome. Peter probably also used the title in the same way. 1 Peter 5:13 footnotes.

wickedness centre of the world will return to Babylon where it will have twice the wickedness, (represented in the vision by the two women, rather than just Jezebel, being set back in her own place).

> *I asked the angel, "Where are they taking it?" He answered, "To Babylonia, where they will build a temple for it. When the temple is finished, the basket will be placed there to be worshipped." .*[103]
>
> *Who is this coming from Bozrah in Edom with clothes stained red? Who is this hero marching in his glorious uniform? "It's me, the LORD! I have won the battle, and I can save you!" What are those red spots? Your clothes look stained from stomping on grapes. "I alone stomped the grapes! None of the nations helped. I stomped nations in my anger and stained my clothes with their blood. I did this because I wanted to take revenge. The time had come to rescue my people. No one was there to help me or to give support; my mighty arm won the battle, strengthened by my anger. In my fury I stomped on nations and made them drunk; their blood poured out everywhere on earth." .*[104]

Since the beginning of time, whenever God has announced an unconditional covenant, it has been challenged by an opposition. From our point of view it often shows itself as opposition to the nation of Israel. The focus of opposition has been on the people, but it is in fact, an opposition to God's plan for salvation. When God established the

103 Zechariah 5:10
104 Isaiah 63:1

Abrahamic covenant in Genesis chapter twelve, it was opposed by the nations of the world.[105] When God established his covenant giving Israel land, (from which salvation would come), it was opposed by the surrounding nations that descended from Esau.[106] Today, we group them together to call them 'Arabs' or 'Palestinians', but closer examination suggests we are wrong to group them in this way.

When God re-asserts his kingly covenant through David,[107] the church that tried to usurp it with doctrines claiming itself to be the new chosen people. The church is grafted into the promises to Israel, The promise replaced with a new one given to the church. God re-announced an everlasting covenant that is unconditional and will never taken be away by anyone:

> *The LORD said: The time will surely come when I will make a new agreement with the people of Israel and Judah. It will be different from the agreement I made with their ancestors when I led them out of Egypt. Although I was their God, they broke that agreement. Here is the new agreement that I, the LORD, will make with the people of Israel: I will write my laws on their hearts and minds. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they have to teach one another to obey me. I, the LORD, promise that all of them will obey me, ordinary people and rulers alike. I will forgive their sins and forget*

105 Gen 12:3
106 Gen 15.
107 2 Sam 7:1

the evil things they have done. I am the LORD All-Powerful. I command the sun to give light each day, the moon and stars to shine at night, and ocean waves to roar. I will never forget to give those commands, and I will never let Israel stop being a nation. I, the LORD, have spoken.

Can you measure the heavens? Can you explore the depths of the earth? That's how hard it would be for me to reject Israel forever, even though they have sinned. I, the LORD, have spoken. The LORD said: Someday, Jerusalem will truly belong to me. It will be rebuilt with a boundary line running from Hananel Tower to Corner Gate. From there, the boundary will go in a straight line to Gareb Hill, then turn toward Goah. Even that disgusting Hinnom Valley will be sacred to me, and so will the eastern slopes that go down from Horse Gate into Kidron Valley. Jerusalem will never again be destroyed.[108]

108 Jeremiah 31: 31 ff

Chapter 5: Dividing the Years

The First Period (49 Years)

Segment	Duration	Key Event	Approx. Date
7 weeks	49 years	Rebuilding Jerusalem	445–396 BC.
62 weeks	434 years	Leads to Messiah's coming	396 BC – 30 AD.
Total: 69 weeks	483 years	Messiah the Prince appears and is cut off	30 – 33 AD.

Table 2: Time plan for Daniels Prophecy

We start by recalling that this book was predicted some five hundred years, before it began to come to pass on the earth. In short, it a spiritual revelation, shown by dreams and visions, revealed and interpreted by the messenger named Gabriel, who was commissioned to unlock the mysteries.[109]

> *While I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being*

109 Gabriel is synonymous with most unusual announcements in scripture. "Gabriel" means "Strength of God." God's power is in his word or announcement. When God Says. It comes to pass and nothing can stop it.

caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. [110]

His message was:

"Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place."[111]

When will This Period Begin?

From the command to rebuild Jerusalem until the coming of the Chosen Leader, it will be seven weeks followed by another sixty-two weeks. During the first seven weeks, Streets will be built in Jerusalem, and a trench will be dug around the city for protection, but these will be difficult times.[112]

Who issued the command? King Artaxerxes I of Persia in 445^{BC} [113]. This authorised the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls and city, and that command triggers the start of the prophetic clock. The temple was rebuilt during troubled times covered in the first 49 years. (445–396^{BC}). This period covers the reconstruction led by Nehemiah and Ezra who built with trowel in one hand and sword in the other. First the Temple was rebuilt against the opposition of the local leaders and surrounding tribes, they managed to delay

110 Dan 9:21
111 Daniel 9:24,
112 Dan 9:25
113 The decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1–8)

the completion until the king confirmed he had written a decree saying that his people should go back and build their temple to pray to their God for him and his wellbeing.

> *"In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: 'Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem. And let each survivor, in whatever place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.*[114]

The second period (434 years)

> *…then for sixty-two weeks troubled time will remain while the city is built up with squares and moats*[115]

The next period, 434 years, (396^{BC} – 32^{AD}.), sees the expansion of the project to restore the whole of Jerusalem. This period is mainly covered in the books of Nehemiah and Ezra. But it extends beyond their time in history, through the time of the Maccabees and into the life and

114 Ezra 1:1–4
115 Daniel 9:25

time of Jesus. This period sees the rise of the four successive kingdoms. The forth, (the Roman empire), demolished Nehemiah's temple, and rebuilt a modern temple complex, which included a palace for their Herods. This period continues on, until it ends with the destruction of the temple so lavishly built by the Romans. The Romans destroyed their own handiwork in seventy[AD]. Daniel, also interprets passages from the book of Isaiah chapter fifty-three, with which he was very conversant.

> *"At the end of the sixty-two weeks, the Chosen Leader will be killed and left with nothing. A foreign ruler and his army will sweep down like a mighty flood, leaving both the city and the temple in ruins, but, war and destruction will continue until the end, just as God has decided."*[116]

What Happens At The End Of This Period?

Luke records Jesus, commenting on the typical 'media question' of the day. '*How can the suffering messiah also be the conquering king?'* That same question was still being asked when the Ethiopian Eunuch asked Philip[117] '*Is he speaking of himself or another'*? Jesus, using Daniel nine and other verses, sought to clarify this Jewish theological confusion from Isaiah's passage. Jesus, in Luke twenty-one, begins his discourse saying they are one and the same person. His answer distinguishes between the life mission of the Messiah, (to save his people), and the destiny of Messiah once he has fulfilled his mission.

116 Daniel 9:26
117 Acts 8: 26 ff

Remember, Jesus is talking to people who held David as the greatest king ever. David himself was anointed king by Samuel but did not take the throne until he had first delivered Israel from the Philistines, starting with Goliath. It is at the conclusion of this process, when the suffering servant becomes the conquering King. While Jesus is teaching, he digresses to point out that Daniel's prophecy concludes with the cutting off of the Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem, which some of those present would see happen. This occurred in 70^{AD}. Daniel's prophecy had been directed primarily at Israel and focuses mainly on events concluding with the destruction of the land and temple and the scattering of refugees.

Returning to the original question based on end times, Jesus explains that the destruction of the temple will usher in a pause-time in Daniel's prophecy for Israel. Jesus himself will usher in a time for gentiles to be grafted into the plan and become part of the kingdom. Then both Jew and Gentile together will see the Messiah King enthroned.

> *"They [Israel] will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."*[118]

Toward the end of this pause-time, which Jesus has for the first time called, *'the time of the Gentiles'*, many strange

118 Luke 21:24

things will happen to the universe that are not explainable to this generation.

> *Strange things will happen during this period. The sun, moon, and stars will behave strangely. The nations on earth will become afraid of the roaring sea and tides, and they won't know what to do. People will be so frightened that they will faint because of what is happening to the world. Every power in the sky will be shaken.*[119]

Only when this period of time has reached its fullness, will the prophetic time start again from where it left off, Daniel's seventieth week will begin.[120]

> *It is <u>then</u> the Son of Man will come in a cloud with great power and glory.*[121]

Jesus declares: This gap is not arbitrary but reflects God's revealed plan. During this period, salvation goes out to all nations, the church is formed and includes Jews and Gentiles[122]. Paul calls this the "mystery" of the Gospel age:

> *"A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in."*[123]

'Why does this need to happen at all?'.

119 Luke 21:25
120 See Revelation 6–19, Daniel 2:44; Revelation 19:11–16.
121 Luke 21:25
122 Romans 11:11–25; Ephesians 3:4–6.
123 Romans 11:25

The Purpose Of This Period According to Daniel

Jesus gave this teaching to all Israel in a general discourse on the Mount of Olives[124]. After this he took Peter, James, John, and Andrew aside to the Temple Mount, for a further seminar where he explained events in greater detail[125]. In this second seminar, based on Daniel's prophecy, he explains the logical progression of events and the reason behind them.

God has decided that for a period of 490 years, Israel and the Holy City must suffer as the price of their sins. By the end of this time, God will have made reprobation for those sins and justice will be satisfied. Daniel's prayer is interrupted by a messenger who tells him the 70th week will not begin until the people of Israel:

- Deal with their transgression,
- Make an end to sin,
- Reconcile themselves to God.
- Come into righteousness,
- Finalise the last seal,
- Anoint the most Holy place.

Seventy weeks are allocated for you the people of God and the holy city, to close the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make expiation for iniquity, and to bring in the righteousness of the ages, and to seal the vision and prophet, and to anoint the holy of holies. From

124 Luke 21, Mark 13, and Matthew 24
125 Another gap in the narrative that has to be read carefully, (Mark 13:3).

the issuing of the command to restore and to build Jerusalem until Messiah, until the Prince comes, will be 434 years. While the streets and the moat are being rebuilt, it will be troubled times. At the end of the 434th year, Messiah will be cut off from the land of the living, and you shall have nothing; the enemy of the prince shall proceed to destroy the city and the sanctuary. And war and destruction will continue [for an unknown time] until the end, just as God has decided.[126]

Finally the enemy will confirm a seven-year covenant between Israel and the many; But in the midst of the covenant he shall cause sacrifices and oblation to cease, while under the protection of the enemy, will erect an abomination that will stand until the determined final consumption is poured out upon them.[127]

Six Purposes For This Time.

1st: Bring repentance for transgression and idolatry

Moses, Solomon and the prophets all said that would happen. This suggests at some time they will recognise Jesus and turn to him as a nation.

And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem

126 Dan 9:24-27

127 Thessalonians 2:3–4 explains this clearly: "The man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, **who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God,

will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. The land shall mourn, each family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves [128]*;*

2nd: Finalise the judgment on sin.

"On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness. "And on that day, declares the LORD of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more. And also will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness.[129]

3rd: Make reconciliation for iniquity.

The cross will be applied to the Jewish nation! As gentiles we often overlook that. The cross applied to the Jews also. Through the ages, the organized church has at various times used that as a reason to persecute the nation of Israel, blaming them for killing Jesus. When we are talking of reconciliation for iniquity, The Church needs to confess and repent also for its past hostility to the people of Israel.

4th: Bring in everlasting righteousness.

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be

128 Zechariah 12:10
129 Zechariah 13:1

saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness'. [130]

Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when they shall no longer say, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,' but 'As the LORD lives who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them'. Then they shall dwell in their own land.

5th: Seal both vision and prophet.

The period is also necessary because prophecy is not instant. Humans would like it to be, but this time period will last as long as it takes to complete everything the prophets have declared.

6th: Anoint a most holy place.

Quadesh, (holy of holies). What are the definitive signs to start recounting week 70 of Daniel.[131] That is an important and sobering question, and prophecy deserves careful, biblical handling. The "seventieth week" of Daniel[132] refers to a final seven-year period decreed for Israel and Jerusalem. It is the same seven-year tribulation described in Revelation chapters six to nineteen, the climactic period before Christ's Second Coming.

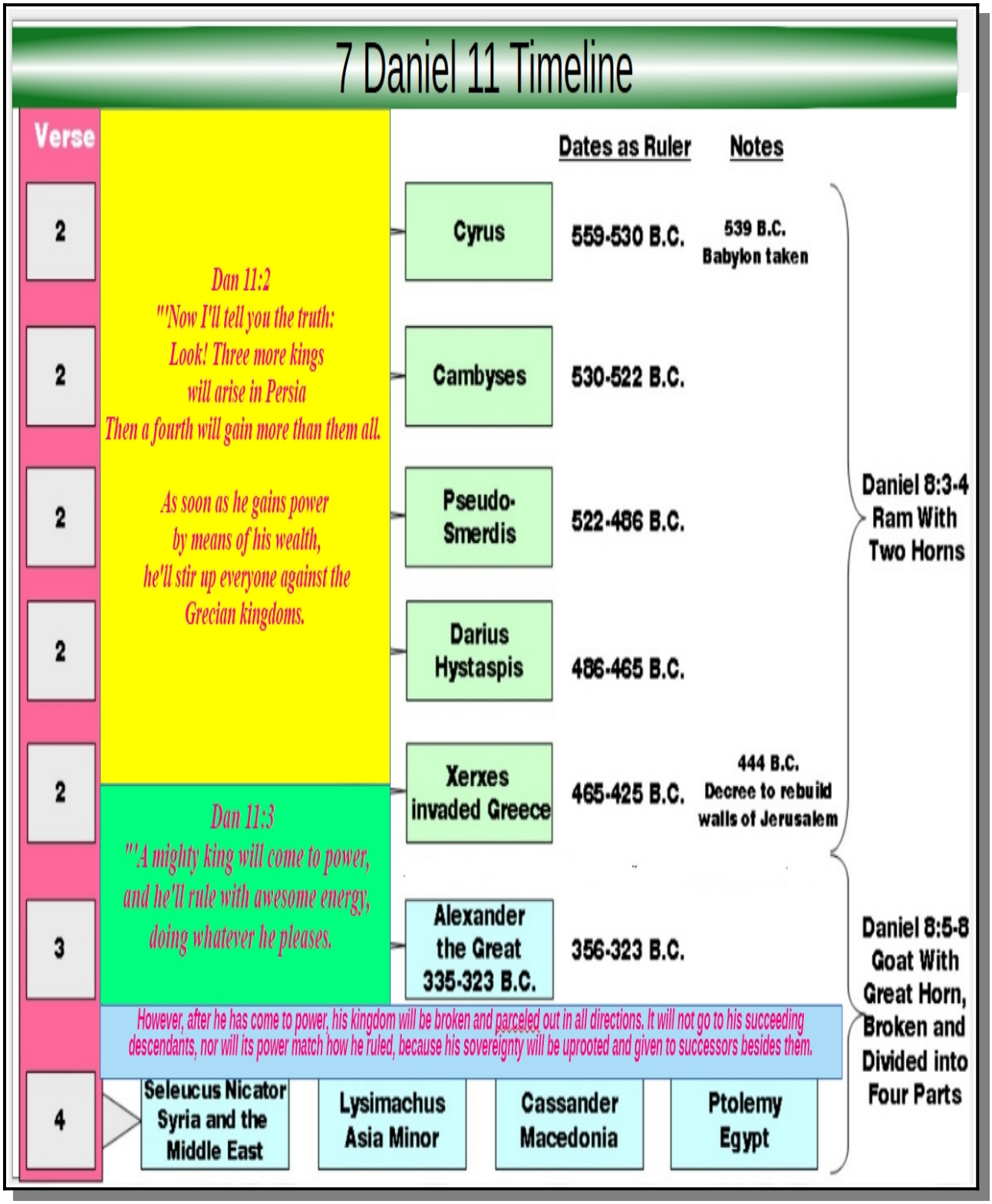
130 Jeremiah 23:5
131 Ezekiel 40 to 48
132 Daniel 9:24–27

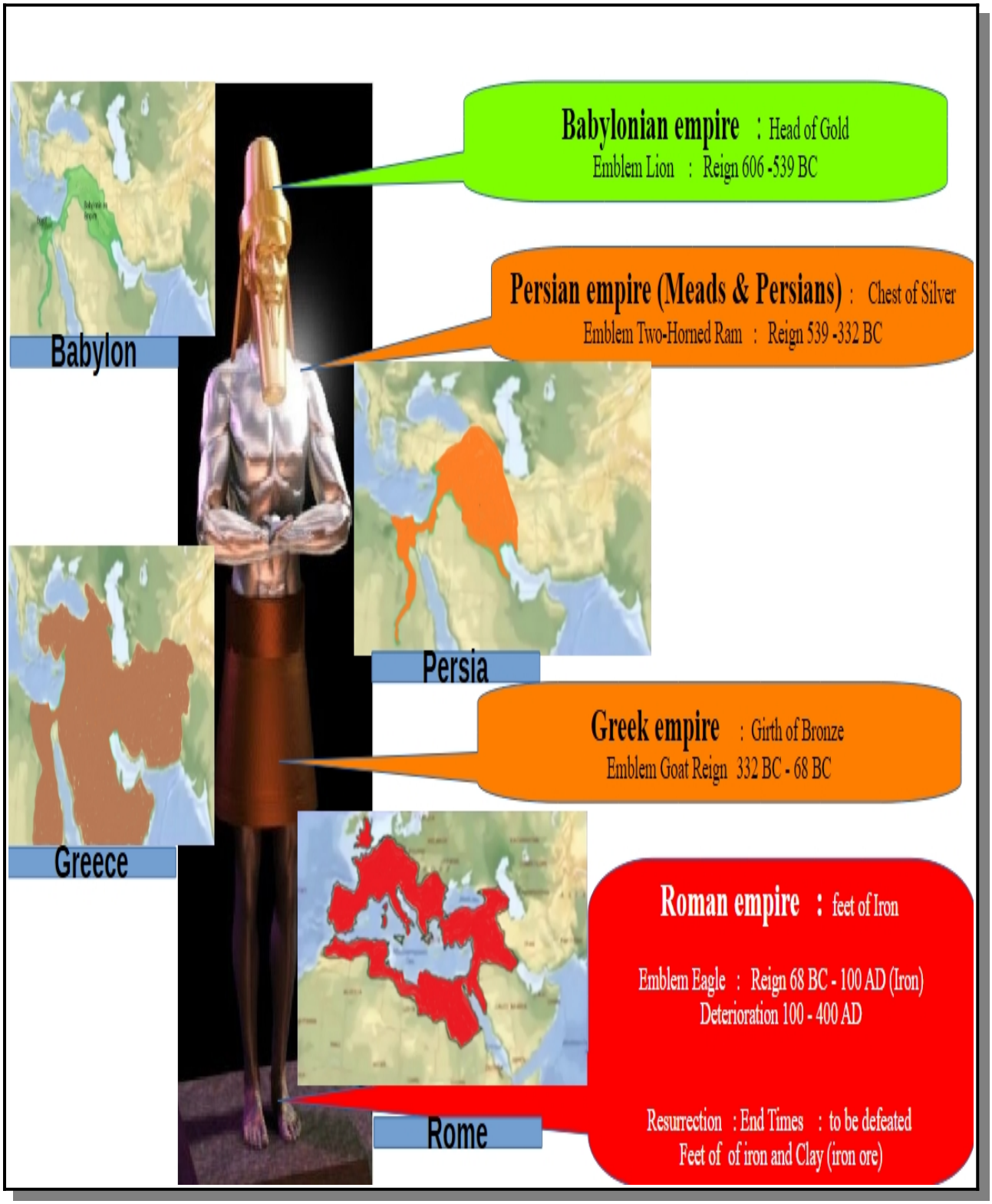
Let us first recall the groundwork the angel Gabriel gave Daniel:

> *"Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city… Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one… shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again… And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off"* [133].

What remains for the future is the final, 70th week, which will be triggered by the signing of a covenant involving Israel and a world ruler (commonly called the Antichrist).

133 Daniel 9:24–26,


7 Daniel 11 Timeline
Verse
Dates as Ruler
Notes
2
2
2
2
2
3
4
Dan 11:2
"'Now I'll tell you the truth:
Look! Three more kings
will arise in Persia
Then a fourth will gain more than them all.
As soon as he gains power
by means of his wealth,
he'll stir up everyone against the
Grecian kingdoms.
Dan 11:3
"'A mighty king will come to power,
and he'll rule with awesome energy,
doing whatever he pleases.
However, after he has come to power, his kingdom will be broken and parceled out in all directions. It will not go to his succeeding descendants, nor will its power match how he ruled, because his sovereignty will be uprooted and given to successors besides them.
Cyrus
559-530 B.C.
539 B.C.
Babylon taken
Cambyses
530-522 B.C.
Pseudo-
Smerdis
522-486 B.C.
Darius
Hystaspis
486-465 B.C.
Xerxes
invaded Greece
465-425 B.C.
444 B.C.
Decree to rebuild
walls of Jerusalem
Alexander
the Great
335-323 B.C.
356-323 B.C.
Seleucus Nicator
Syria and the
Middle East
Lysimachus
Asia Minor
Cassander
Macedonia
Ptolemy
Egypt
Daniel 8:3-4
Ram With
Two Horns
Daniel 8:5-8
Goat With
Great Horn,
Broken and
Divided into
Four Parts


Babylonian empire : Head of Gold
Emblem Lion : Reign 606 -539 BC
Persian empire (Meads & Persians) : Chest of Silver
Emblem Two-Horned Ram : Reign 539 -332 BC
Babylon
Persia
Greek empire : Girth of Bronze
Emblem Goat Reign 332 BC - 68 BC
Greece
Roman empire : feet of Iron
Emblem Eagle : Reign 68 BC - 100 AD (Iron)
Deterioration 100 - 400 AD
Resurrection : End Times : to be defeated
Feet of of iron and Clay (iron ore)
Rome

Chapter 6: A Time For Gentiles

By now Daniel is devastated. He has been left with a picture of Israel refugees leaving Jerusalem in droves once again.

> *At the end of the sixty-two weeks, the Chosen Leader will be killed and left with nothing. A foreign ruler and his army will sweep down like a mighty flood, leaving both the city and the temple in ruins, but war and destruction will continue until the end time, just as God has decided*[134].

Daniel is thrown back on a merciful God for his comfort, spending an extended period of prayer and fasting, confessing the sins of his people.

> *And I made prayer to the Lord my God, putting our sins before him, and said, O Lord, the great God, greatly to be feared. Keeping your agreement and mercy with those who have love for you and do your orders*[135]
>
> *Even while I was still in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at first when my weariness was great, put his hand on me about the time of the evening offering. He said, O Daniel, I have come now to give you wisdom*[136].

In this conversation, Daniel is told not to worry, God is not going to neglect his people. There will be a pause in time, but during that time Israel will not be neglected. God

134 Daniel 9:26,
135 Dan 9:4
136 Dan 9:21

reminds Daniel that his purpose in choosing Israel was to be the means of blessing the Gentiles. The Messiah being cut off from the land of the living was to enable the Gentiles to be drafted into the kingdom also.

The sixty-ninth week ends with the Messiah's death and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in seventy[AD]. The war will continue beyond that time until God decides it should end. At that point, week seventy will begin with a clear sign. The sign will be the signing of a peace contract between Israel and the neighbouring countries, overseen by a powerful leader who will have the power arbitrate:

> *For one week this foreigner will make a firm agreement between many people, but halfway through this week, he will end all sacrifices and offerings, replacing them with a "Horrible Thing" that causes destruction. And it will stay there until the time God has decided to destroy the one who destroys.*[137]

Jesus, referring to this space between these two events, calls it the time of the Gentiles:

> *… and Jerusalem will be crushed under the feet of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles are complete.*[138]

That statement clearly made its mark on Peter who took up the challenge to go to the gentiles and preach the good news.[139] Again, before Paul was converted, Jesus told

137 Dan 9:27
138 Luke 21:24
139 Acts 11

Ananias in a vision, ‘Paul had been chosen as an envoy to the gentiles’.

> *But the Lord said, Go without fear: for he is a special vessel for me, to give to the gentiles, kings and to the children of Israel the knowledge of my name:*[140]

Later, Paul talking about gentiles being grafted into the kingdom of God, asks, *‘Why would the Jewish nation need to be grafted into its own tree?'*

> *For I do not wish you to be ignorant, or wise in your own conceit brethren, the blindness of Israel has happened precisely so the fulness of the gentile nations may come in;* [141]

Daniel, writing before any of this has become clear, was reading what the other guys in the band had prophesied and relying on Gabriel to interpret. What we can check out in history, is what Gabriel had told Daniel beforehand:

> *From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem until the time of the prince of peace shall be 490 years (seven-sevens).*

From the decree of Artaxerxes March the 14th 445 BC To the entrance into Jerusalem by Jesus as prophesied by ‘the band’, has been historically verified.[142] Further, the cutting off of Messiah from the land of the living and the

140 Acts 9:15
141 Romans 11:25
142 Isaiah 53: Zechariah 9: 9 and others

destruction of the temple in 70^{AD} is also accurately confirmed.

The Gap Year is Necessary for the Jews

The New Testament explains much of what Daniel proclaimed, but could not know. The crossover time at the end of Daniel's 49^{th} week is the period covered by the gospels and Acts. In these, Jesus himself explains some of the obscure prophecies predicted by the guys in the band. Jesus is not enlightening us as to what will or will not happen but revealing the heart and reasoning of God his father behind those happenings:

Why did Jesus weep over Jerusalem when he came near to it for the last time?

> *And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, '**if you had known this day the things which belong to you would be like peace but now they will be hid from you'** [143]*

143 Luke 19: 41 ff

Why must the Temple be destroyed and the city ransacked in seventy^{AD}?

> *Because you did not recognise the time of your visitation.*[144]

Paul expands on that:

> *They are blind and will indeed be blind until the fullness of the gentiles time comes in.*

To the question, 'Why will Messiah not return as king now?', he answers:

> *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, [time of gentiles].*[145]

It was a deliberate teaching tactic of Jesus to stop part way in a sentence. When he announced the beginning of his earthly ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, he was teaching his disciples, (even down to us in our age), look for pauses! This first pause came between, '*the day of the anointing'*, and the '*day of vengeance of our God*'. The early church did not pick it up, but it is clear enough for Jesus who knew his destiny and the mind of his father! He stopped, sat down, and looked at the people, because the

144 Luke 19: 41-44
145 Isa 61:1

'year of the Lords favour' covers the pause period after the sixty-ninth week until the seventieth week begins.

> *And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.*[146]

'*Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing*', is a rehearsal of what the prophet Isaiah had already announced to the people. Literally the phrase originates from a fisherman's term - 'today the catch in the net is released'. It is His introduction to his sermon from Isaiah:

> *For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you.*[147]

Amos also uses pauses in his statements. Declaring the sixty-ninth week he says:

> *Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, the house of Jacob. I will raise it to the ground, but not utterly destroy it," declares the LORD. "For*

146 Luke 4:17
147 Isa 54:7

behold, I will command, and shake the house of Israel among all the nations as one shakes with a sieve, only dust but no pebble shall fall to the earth.[148]

But about week seventy he declares:

"In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old,[149]

Micah employs the same method of a pause:

They will covet fields and seise them, and take the people … How should this be O house of Jacob? Has the LORD grown impatient? Are these his deeds delayed? Do not my words do good to him who walks uprightly? [150] *But… It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, and many nations shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*[151]

Explaining the pause between his resurrection and return, Jesus said:

148 Amos 9:8
149 Amos 9:9
150 Mic 2:2
151 Mic 4:1

It is too bad that today your people don't know what will bring them peace! Now it is hidden from them.[152]

Paul clarifies that statement:

My friends, I don't want you Gentiles to be so proud of yourselves. So I will explain the mystery of what has happened to the people of Israel. Some of them have become stubborn, and they will stay like that until the complete number of Gentiles has come in. In this way all of Israel will be saved, as the Scriptures say, "From Zion someone will come to rescue us. Then Jacob's descendants will stop being evil.[153]

Jesus used stories when he spoke to the people, not just to make the contents simple, but because, when he was speaking about the plan of His Father, he needed to explain the emotion and motivation behind his father's character:

"I will use stories to speak my message and to explain things that have been hidden since the creation of the world." [154]

Paul explains:

As you read the letter, you will also find out how well I really do understand the mystery about Christ. No one knew about this mystery until God's Spirit told it to his holy apostles and prophets. And the mystery is this: Because of Christ Jesus, the good news, has given the Gentiles a share in the promises that God gave to the

152 Luke 19:42
153 Until … Romans 11:25:
154 Mat 13:34

Jews. God has also let the Gentiles be part of the same body. God treated me with kindness. His power worked in me, and it became my job to spread the good news. I am the least important of all God's people. But God was kind and chose me to tell the Gentiles that because of Christ there are blessings that cannot be measured. God, who created everything, wanted me to help everyone understand the mysterious plan that had always been hidden in his mind.[155]

The 'Gap-Year' is Necessary for the Church.

The seven Churches at the beginning of the book of Revelation are real churches. Just as a real farmer sowing seeds becomes a parable, so the seven real churches become a prophecy to illustrate the seven stages the church will go through in the gap-year. Some modern commentators may go too far by setting historic dates for each period, but history shows us clear parallels with these chapters. The church has gone through its history, and has shown a similar pattern to the predictions in the first three chapters of Revelation. But the prophetic value of these verses is not in looking back to the history of church, but as a spiritual and structural key to the rest of the book.

The time in which the seven-churches exist fits between Daniel's 69th and 70th weeks. Daniel and the band tell us there will be a gap. Jesus and Paul tell us the reason for

155 Ephesians 3:4

that gap. It is a time to bring in the reinforcements God has promised Israel.

Revelation picks up expands and ties them together. Daniel began to show what will happen. Daniel ended with the Messiah being cut off, but Messiah showed the father's motivation behind happenings. Revelation expands on where those happenings will lead after Messiah was cut off. He is now risen and walks as judge and advisor among churches to keep it on track for His return. Prophetically, Jesus proclaims what will happen to the church through this 'gap-year'. Tactically, Jesus is working within individual Churches to keep them on track. Judgementally, Jesus is looking to see if each church will respond or not. In that, the purpose of Revelation is incorporated into and compliments the purpose of Daniel. While the comparisons between history and church-age are useful and productive, their real relevance lies as the exposition of Daniel's 'gap-year' between his weeks 69 and 70.

Where the book Revelation Connects

Chapters 1 -3 of Revelation provides a broad picture of the gap-year and how the church will make its way through it. This time period fits within Israel's prophetic timeline for His people Israel, but expands to the reinforcement troops of the church fighting alongside Israel. It is the call to go to

spiritual war.[156] Go in and take the land. In these chapters, Jesus addresses the troops.

> *Look, here comes a troop of riders, horsemen in pairs. And one answered, 'Fallen! Fallen is Babylon! All the images of her gods lie shattered on the ground!*

Now reinforcements are on the way evil retreats to Babylon. In Revelation chapter 18, the battle has turned:

> *The angel shouted, "Fallen! Powerful Babylon has fallen and is now the home of demons. It is the den of every filthy spirit and of all unclean birds, and every dirty and hated animal. Babylon's evil and immoral wine has made all nations drunk. Every king on earth has slept with her, and every merchant on earth is rich because of her evil desires." Then I heard another voice from heaven shout, "My people, you must escape from Babylon. Don't take part in her sins and share her punishment. Her sins are piled as high as heaven. God has remembered the evil she has done[157].*

What many take out of context to be the end of Babylon is not. Evil has retreated to her and is confined in her. Full eradication of evil comes later in Revelation chapter-twenty, when Satan and death are destroyed forever. Until then, while the nation of Israel is also regrouping in her own territory, the time of Gentiles is still here. In short, the angel's proclamation is both a victory cry and a warning of the advancement of God's justice and holiness on the one

156 Isaiah 21:9
157 Rev 18:2 ff

hand, and warning for those still attached to the world's system of pride, idolatry, and moral compromise on the other. It is a rounding up and confining.

> *"The mystery was made known to me by revelation… that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body…"* [158]

Whereas, John himself states

> *"The revelation of Jesus Christ… to show to his servants the things that must soon take place."*[159]

So while Revelation builds upon Daniel's prophecy, its central focus is the unveiling of Jesus Christ as the Sovereign Lord who brings Daniel's vision to its fulfilment.

From Revelation 4 verse 1 on, the writings alternate between events in heaven and on earth, to show that it is events in heaven that control the happenings on earth and not the circumstances mankind will witness on earth. The phrase "*after this*" signals a shift:

> *"After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this'."*[160]

158 Ephesians 3:3–6,
159 Revelation 1:1
160 Revelation 4:1,

Stage	Revelation (Church)	Moral/Spiritual Condition	Prophetically Connected to Daniel
Ephesus Smyrna Pergamum	Early devotion persecution Compromise	Church purified in early age	Gap after 69th week
Thyatira Sardis	Deep corruption spiritual death	Degeneration before the end	Moral decay before Tribulation
Philadelphia Laodicea	Faithful remnant lukewarm apostasy	Final separation, Church completion	Climate before 70th week resumes
Revelation 4–19	Church in heaven, judgments on earth	Tribulation period	Daniel's 70th week fulfilled

Table 3: Daniel as seen in Revelation

Chapter 7: INTERLUDE

It is here, between chapter 3 and chapter 4 of Revelation I must insert a break to discuss how we interpret these prophecies.

From here on in, Christian pilgrims must travel alone through lands where wolves live. They will meet on their journey, (as I have met on mine), many who want to show them a short cut. Mr worldly-wise will try to entice them with his wisdom, saying he knows the sequence of events from here on. He doesn't! Mark well what Jesus said:

> *"Many will come in my name saying The Christ is here, the Antichrist is there; the beast is rising in the north. Don't believe them"!*

I asked myself, when Jesus came last time, why were the Pharisees and others so blind? I conclude it was partly due to the well meaning academics who had convinced the people that the Messiah must conform to their doctrine which was mistaken. The *'media-talk'* of the day simply repeated the old 'red herrings' daily. '*How can Messiah be both suffering servant and conquering king?'*. The diversion tactic was, (as it is today), just keep asking the same old questions until people could not hear the answer. How I hope when Messiah comes again the consensus of opinion from the experts will not blind the people, as the Pharisees did the first time Jesus came. Scripture suggest

many will rather follow the explanation of the clever, even after such a mystery as the rapture. God is not bound by your doctrine or mine. He Is! It never ceases to amaze me, that even after a thousand years of Jesus' reign on earth, the world will rebel and look for another to reign in his place[161]. I can only offer the following advice as you travel this part of the journey: Keep your eyes on the landmarks and away from the diverting footpath signs. Look for the markers and not the doctrines that have cocooned them.

The Rapture

You may be in the rapture before, during or after the tribulation, or you may have to wait for the return of Jesus himself. What you wish for by choice or place in your doctrine, will not alter the course of the path God has set. The rapture of the church is imminent; no other biblical prophecy needs to be fulfilled or signpost when the rapture will happen:

> *When Christ comes in the clouds to "snatch away" all those who trust in Him..,*[162]
>
> *Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*[163]

161 Revelation 20:7–9
162 1 Corinthians 15:52.
163 1 Thessalonians 4:17

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other[164].

I tell you, in that night there shall be two people in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left[165].

And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven[166].

Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. With one indivisible thrust and in one moment of time, as the last trump sounds, the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we that live shall be changed[167].

Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not[168].

There are seven raptures mentioned in scripture:

- Enoch in Genesis 5:42 and Hebrews 11 5
- Elijah in 2 kings 2: 1 and 11
- Jesus in Mark 16 19 Act 1 9 and revelation 12,5
- Philip Acts 839
- Paul 2 Corinthians 12: 2 4
- And the body of Christ 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- John revelation chapter 4

164 Matthew 24:31
165 Luke 17:34
166 Mark 13:27
167 Corinthians 15:51
168 Luke 12:40

All of these use the word rapture. Interestingly, like the death of the firstborn in Egypt, they were all explained by authorities afterwards. Such strange events in history, like the disappearance of the dinosaurs, can all be explained by the experts given time. But not all are predicted so confidently by prophets.

The marker is:

There will be a rapture! There will be no pre-empting it. Both it and its timing is a mystery.

The Rise of the Antichrist.[169]

A deceiving man will gain worldwide control, with promises of peace[170]. He will be aided by another man, called the false prophet[171]. There are many candidates out there already who might look like this ‘prince that is to come’. There are already those saying follow me for Peace, (when there is no peace)'. He may be the predicted one, or he may be a foreshadowing of the one to come.

> *But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here*[172].

169 2 Thessalonians 2:7–8
170 Revelation 13:1; Daniel 9:27
171 Revelation 19:20
172 1 John 4:3

Dear children, the last hour is here. You have heard that the Antichrist is coming, and already many such Antichrists have appeared. From this we know that the last hour has come[173].

And who is a liar? Anyone who says that Jesus is not the Christ. Anyone who denies the Father and the Son is an Antichrist[174].

I say this because many deceivers have gone out into the world. They deny that Jesus Christ came in a real body. Such a person is a deceiver and an Antichrist[175].

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world[176].

This man will come to do the work of Satan with counterfeit power and signs and miracles[177].

For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones[178].

But evil people and impostors will flourish. They will deceive others and will themselves be deceived[179].

The day is coming when you will see what Daniel the prophet spoke about—the sacrilegious object that causes

173 1 John 2:18
174 1 John 2:22
175 2 John 1:7
176 1 John 4:1
177 2 Thessalonians 2:9
178 Matthew 24:24
179 2 Timothy 3:13

desecration standing in the Holy Place (reader, pay attention!)[180].

The marker is:

Evil people and impostors will flourish. They will deceive others and will themselves be deceived. They will be around throughout the time of the gentiles. Some will even make contracts of peace between Israel and other nations. The final Antichrist will make a contract between Israel and the surrounding nations for seven years and renegue on it part way through.

The Abomination of Desolation[181].

There have been several abominations in Jewish history. In Daniel's time it was a gold plated statue of Nebuchadnezzar. During the Maccabean reign it was a statue of the Roman emperor and a feast of Bacon set up in the temple. The one to watch for will occur at the midway point of the seven-year contract, signed by the Antichrist. It will break his covenant with Israel and will itself be a marker that Daniel's prophecy is on track.

The marker is:

The Antichrist will reveal himself only after he has fooled many, from that point on he will persecute the faithful ones.

180 Matthew 24:15
181 Daniel 12:11; Mark 13:14; Revelation 12:17

The Tribulation [182]

Tribulation is kin to the world. Tribulation is pressure, distress, or affliction. It applies to every age, race, and nation.[183]. It applies to the process of giving birth and all the life that birth produces[184]. Jesus prophesied tribulation greatly increased toward the end of the '*Gap-Year'*[185]. Daniel links this particular tribulation to the activity of the Antichrist and the reneged upon peace contract[186]. Revelation links its intensity further, to the groaning of a cosmos that has been so abused by sin, It is portrayed in the seals that are opened in Heaven[187]. Jesus recognising that it is not something we can avoid, points to overcoming it with a peace that can see us through it[188]. Peter points to the Christian's hope that, having gone through it, it will cease and the whole world will enter a time of renewal[189].

This particular tribulation, is a period in which God's judgment is poured out on all sinful humanity[190]. When, where, upon whom is not defined. Wishful thinking might want to exclude '*my group'* when forming my doctrine. But the statements: '*the time will be shortened for the sake of those being persecuted*' and '*A period in which God's*

182 Matthew 24:21–22
183 John 16:33; Matthew 24:30
184 Genesis 3; Romans 8:22; Acts 14:22 Romans 5:3–5
185 Matthew 24:21
186 Daniel 9:27
187 Revelation chapters 6–16
188 John 14:27
189 2 Peter 3:13
190 Nahum 1:2

*judgment is poured out on **all** sinful humanity*', suggests we are not at liberty to rule in or rule out, anybody living.

> *For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.*

The marker is:

The time the Antichrist reneges upon his contract will trigger a breakdown in the cosmos that will rebound on all humanity at the same time[191]. This may or may not coincide with the seven seals described in Revelation.

The Battle of Gog and Magog

A great army from the north, in alliance with several other countries from the Middle East and Africa, surrounds Israel ready to invade it. How Gog, (which may or may not be Russia in today's language), marches his armies down from The north to the Megiddo plane and surround Jerusalem for the final battle is an unknown. Human logic might suggest, (because they are described as a land army), he must lead them through Ukraine, Turkey and Syria, (gathering them on the way), but that limits the plan of God to human intelligence and is ill-advised. The purpose once again is to watch what happens in the nations north of Jerusalem. The

191 Daniel 9:27

fool will have egg on his face if God chooses to bring them by another way.

The Marker is:

When you see the armies from the north, gathering in the Megiddo Valley. (not when you see the armies of the north at war with other nations). Then look up because God will intervene to save his own people very soon.

The Judgment Of The Nations[192]

The judgement of the nations is the scope of judgement. It is not a judgement on the collective choice of nations. Like the shepherd gathers all his flocks in one place to walk through them, (separating those that are pregnant or those ready for market), so the individual sheep will be chosen and placed in groups. The truth is we do not have a choice where we are born. Nations do not give their allegiance to God, people do.

The Marker is:

When the Son of Man comes with the angels then he will separate individuals into groups not by nationality but by allegiance[193].

192 Matthew 25:31–46
193 Matthew 25:31

The Binding of Satan and the Millennial Kingdom.[194]

Jesus will be enthroned in Jerusalem. Satan, will be bound in chains, for the period of His reign. The earth and the cosmos will have this period to renew and recover, and the people will live in peace and prosperity[195]. Not all nations will be happy with this.

> *Though grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil and do not regard the majesty of the LORD*[196].

Jesus will now have to rule with a rod of iron to keep the nations in check. At the end of that period, many people and nations will rebel against the authority of Jesus once again.

> *When the thousand years are complete, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations… to gather them for battle*[197].

This fact may alter the imagination of many believer's, about the millennium period and its reign. Will it all be utopia?

The Marker is:

When the Son of Man comes with the angels he will set up His kingdom and rule all nations with a strong arm. Satan's exploits in the world will be very limited, but still there.

194 Revelation 20:1–3
195 Revelation 20; Isaiah 60–62
196 Isaiah 26:10,
197 Revelation 20:7–8

The Great White Throne Judgment And The New Creation[198].

This is a renewal process period, Satan will be released from his limitation to stand before the throne of God himself. He will be judged and cast into the lake of fire. All those in hell will be brought forth, and all the wicked from all eras of history will be resurrected to stand before God in a final judgment[199].

The Marker is:

A complete remake of the heavens and the earth. It is at this time that God wipes away all tears and there will be no more pain, death, or sorrow. The new Jerusalem and heaven's Jerusalem unite, and the children of God will enjoy eternity with Him.

198 Revelation 20:7–10 & Revelation 21–22
199 Revelation 20:11–15

Chapter 8: The Gap-Year

As the title gap-year suggests, our travel brings us to crossroads where we choose a direction from what we have seen so far. If we just follow the natural route, we will simply look through history since the fall of Jerusalem, ticking-off prophecies as they are fulfilled between that time and now. That is not a good route to take because beyond the 'now' is a muddy field called speculation; *'What will happen next?' What will be the order of events?'* That produces speculative doctrine. Speculative doctrine divides the church on points nobody knows, Like the Pharisees of old, it will only blind us in our own interpretations, until we will not recognise the Messiah when he comes. Better to take time out to consolidate what Daniel and the boys have taught us so far, before we check list the events as they have been accomplished. What Daniel and the boys of the band have taught us by revealing history before it occurred, is about the sovereignty of God that brought events to pass. Daniel, as we saw in an earlier chapter, is Calvinistic[200] in his understanding of the divine right of Kings. He has to be, under an egotist king like Nebuchadnezzar, but He is not a Calvinist. He sees God's purposes being brought about through the actions of a pagan king, not by making the king do them.

200 Calvinist doctrine is the unwavering belief in the absolute sovereignty of God. Everything is predestined. God determines the fate of every individual, selecting some for salvation while others are left to their own devices.

Time Out On Sovereignty

Daniel, is taken up, into the same governmental briefing room that Isaiah had visited before him. They are not the only ones to visit that operations room. The writer of Job had been there to witness the discussion between God and Satan over the character of Job. Micah saw a vision of God's heavenly court deliberating on how to deal with King Ahab:

> *I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left*[201].

Ezekiel saw God's glory and throne in his vision by the River Kebar: Ezekiel is shown how God directs events on earth from His glorious throne, emphasizing God's sovereignty even over Israel's exile.

> *Above the expanse over their heads was the likeness of a throne, with a figure like that of a man seated on it… and this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD*[202].

Later, John was transported into heaven and saw the same throne of God: John's vision echoes Isaiah and Ezekiel, showing worship, judgment, and the unfolding of God's plan for creation and redemption.

---

201 1 Kings 22:19,
202 Ezekiel 1:26–28

At once I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne standing in heaven, with someone seated on it. And the One seated there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and a rainbow encircled the throne[203].

There he was shown the workings behind God's eternal plan. Daniel is shown, then obediently writes down, the culmination of future unfolding events. But all of these are unequivocal on the sovereignty of God in the operations room.

Sovereignty of God:

This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the decision by the word of the holy ones, so that the living may know that ***t****he Most High rules over the kingdom of men and gives it to whom He wishes, and sets over it the lowliest of men*[204].

The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever,[205]

And He [the lowliest of men] is given dominion, glory, and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed[206].

203 Revelation 4:2–3
204 Daniel 4:17
205 Dan 2:44
206 Daniel 7:14

When Isaiah had visited earlier, he declared:

> *I declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose;* [207]

Daniel, and the boys of the band had a kindred spirit when it came to theology. They believed absolutely in the sovereignty of God. Nebuchadnezzar, in his understanding of divine right of kings would mean 'I act *as though I am God'*. God in His Sovereignty means 'I AM God', When God said *'I declare the end from the beginning'*, He was not saying *'I see the end from the beginning'*, nor *'I have known the end from the beginning'*, but, *'I will accomplish the end from the beginning'*. God declares how the doings will turn out before the doings are done. In saying '*My counsel will stand*' he is saying '*I myself will accomplish all my purpose*'.

God knows the future because:

The future **is** what God said.

The future **is** what God purposed.

The future **is** God processed.

The future **is** God having accomplished.

The future **is** God sustaining.

That is different to the human idea of sovereignty. Nebuchadnezzar understood sovereignty to be the right to decide on the basis of the prediction of wise-men, future

207 Isa 46:10

tellers, sooth sayer, or diviners. He would plan on the basis of what they imagined might happen. In terms of achievement, a kings sovereignty is dependent on might. God's sovereignty is greater because His is based on wisdom, and the freedom, the power and creation of the very substance that can bring about everything he intends. Everything else is subject to God saying yes or no.

God's sovereignty covers natural phenomena that bring things about. In the record of Jonah, the fish, the plant and the worm acted on God's say so because He brought them about.

> *People toss a coin but God himself brings about it landing heads or tails*[208].
>
> *Look up at the sky! Who created the stars you see? He knows how many there are, He calls each one by name, His power is so great—not one of them is missing!*[209]

Why? Not because he has the power to control them by his might, but because He brought them about. Perhaps more poignantly, sovereignty means God has the right to do things that seem illogical to human beings. Things that 'wise-men' cannot see, things beyond the logic of humans, things that look like mistakes, things that seem unjust, things that are inconvenient, things that seem unjust, things that we see as cruel.

208 Pro 16:33
209 Isa 40:26

Moses, among others, took God up on the question of incapacity.

> *But Moses said, "No, LORD, don't send me. I was born with an impediment of speech", The LORD said to him, "Who gives man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or dumb? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? It is I, the LORD.*[210]

Two of the boys in the band discussed the injustices of life. Habakkuk argued it was totally unfair that the good guys always seem to take the come back for the bad guys in life. Jeremiah went to God and relayed the argument, asking whose fault it was that some are blessed and others always seem crushed. God took him down to the local pottery where a potter, trying to make a beautiful vase out of clay, squashed it down and made a potty instead. 'Whose fault was it that it ended up as a potty', asked God? Was the clay to blame for not being pliable enough or the potter to blame for seeing the best he could make out of the clay was a potty? The sovereignty of the potter: observed, decided, determined, and made a very useful pot out of the material available. The status of the pot did not determine its nature, only its function. Sovereignty could have tossed it aside and not made anything at all, but sovereignty purposed the need for a useful but not elegant creation.

210 Exodus 4:10 -11

Remember, If God should so choose that you suffer for doing right, You are better off to obey God and than to suffer for doing wrong[211].

Christ suffered undeserving here on earth. Now you must be ready to suffer as he did, because suffering shows that you have stopped sinning [212].

Don't you understand? I am the only God; there are no others. I am the one who takes life and gives it again. I punished you with suffering to heal, and if I will heal you, nothing can stop me[213]*!*

'*If I will heal you, nothing can stop me*', marks out a difference in logic between God and mankind. But it also holds a very important truth about sovereignty. If nothing else is remembered, remember this because it marks the basic material with which God builds the church. Sovereignty is not the ultimate power, character is! The character of God, determines his sovereignty, and how he uses it. The character of God holds the love, grace, mercy, patience, long-suffering and other attributes that determine God's sovereignty. Imagine if Satan was ever to achieve his goal of usurping God's place! Sovereignty would be determined by all that is evil and not all that is good, because Satan's nature is selfish, egotistic, and all that is

211 1Pe 3:17
212 1Pe 4:1
213 Deutonomy 32:39

evil! Picture if you can, every evil dictator that has ever lived, combined to determine sovereignty.

On the other hand, Daniel records, God: Gathered his people three times to their land, then scattered them three times again as refugees; God determined the building of two temples and then determined both should be destroyed; God determined four kingdoms should rise, one after the other; Then God determined the destruction of three by war and a forth by scattering or dissimulation over the continent. What human logic could devise that? It requires God's character to plan such sovereignty

The climax of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is the forth kingdom and what will happen in it. The Roman Empire was the forth kingdom. It came to power but it was a mish-mash of nations, it came to power as an iron fist, it disintegrated because of its clay feet, unintegrated iron and clay, integral in its creation material. It never consolidated, its in-fighting was there at its conception until it caused its disintegration in approx 420^{AD}. It was never defeated; because there was no nation capable. Rome dissolved back into the nations over Europe where it remains, co-operating together but not united, even today. Considering this prophecy was given around 500^{BC}, the picture is very recognizable

> *And there shall be a forth kingdom, strong as iron,*
> *because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And*

> *like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these. And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.*

It is during this period of dissolved countries, that God set up his Kingdom, a kingdom that is not human in nature and will never be defeated. The statement '*will never be defeated*' means other nations will try to defeat it! The statement '*They will mix and hold together in a poor Marriage*', is a picture of the nations of Europe even to this day. But it could equally be a picture of the church.

> *And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever,*[214]
>
> *Just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.*[215]

214 Dan 2:44
215 Dan 2:45

The dissolving of the Roman Empire into the nations of Europe is the beginning of the time when this, ‘non-human kingdom’ will be established and grow. The interpretation that the church has made from time to time must be challenged; it is not the church that dashed the Roman Empire, That was an act of God long before the church became organised. The idea that the church must take over the world to usher in the kingdom of God is wrong; although it is finding a voice again today in some churches. This argument has been used in history as a deliberate political misinterpretation, for example, to rally the crusaders.

The gap-year is not a period when God sets aside Israel to concentrate on the gentiles, no, he is working among both groups at once. To mark progress, we look at them separately but notice how God is drawing the two groups closer together all the time. The early church worked very hard to try and keep the Jews and Gentiles together, The problem of unity in diversity defeated that aim. One thing to notice here. Prophets usually speak both short term and long term. Daniel speaks of prophecies that may be said to have been fulfilled by some, but on closer scrutiny have not been fully fulfilled yet. They may have a parallel or foreshadowing in the skirmishes events close to the time of the prophecy, but do not fully fulfil the requirements of the prophecies.

Although Israel was scattered among the nations at the end of the demise of the temple in 70^{AD}, they were not forgotten. Neither did their persecution stop. Moses and the prophets forewarned that Israel would be scattered whenever they were disobedient:

> *And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other*[216].
>
> *They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles*[217].

But even during dispersion and the reality of holocaust, God promised not to let Israel be destroyed as a nation completely:

> *For I am with you to save you… though I make a full end of all the nations… I will not make a full end of you*[218].
>
> *Has God rejected His people? By no means! … God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew*[219].

God always promised he would bring them back to their homeland. Isaiah and Ezekiel always expected that return to the land, before the final tribulation judgment:

> *The Lord will … recover the remnant of His people … and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth*[220].

216 Deuteronomy 28:64
217 Luke 21:24
218 Jeremiah 30:11
219 Romans 11:1–2
220 Isaiah 11:11–12

Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off. He made me walk around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry'. Son of man, can these bones live?[221]*. Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O My people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel*[222]*. And I will put My Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land*[223]*.*

During this time of the Gentiles God is working on two fronts, He is building the Church and amalgamating it with his chosen people. The modern State of Israel was set up by the gentile nations in 1948^{AD}. But God is clear, He is doing these things for neither Church or Israel, He will do it to vindicate his name as a Holy Name among all the nations of the earth.

Therefore say to the house of Israel, thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name… And the nations will know that I am the LORD…Through you I will vindicate My holiness before the eyes of the nations. I will take you from among the nations and gather you from all countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you… I will give you a new heart, and a

221 Ezekiel 37:1 -11
222 Ezekiel 37:12
223 Ezekiel 37:14

new spirit I will put within you[224].

Take note of this next passage, it will put into context some of the challenging passages we are going to come back to a little later. When God starts talking about time and '*in an instant'*, He sets himself another challenge. He set the challenge and he delivered it. '*I will do this in one day*', He says:

> *Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labour than she gives birth to her children*[225].

We can tick that box because the State of Israel was signed into being at the Balfour Declaration on November 2nd, 1917.[226] The State of Israel was born. The valley of dry bone re-lives.

> *Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, and He will gather you again from among all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you… and He will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it*[227].

224 Ezekiel 36:22–26
225 Isaiah 66:8
226 Balfour Declaration is a statement made on November 2, 1917, for 'the establishment of a national home for Jewish people'.
227 Deuteronomy 30:3–5

But a land for Israel is one thing, but the people have to return to it. Some nations did all they could to stop the people returning.

> *They conspire together saying, 'Come, let us erase them as a nation, may the name of Israel be remembered no more'. For with one mind they plot together; they form an alliance against You*[228].

On 30th November 1947, the United Nations drew up a plan to partition Palestine and Israel. The following morning, before Israel could form an army, Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, and expeditionary forces from Iraq attacked Israeli settlements. Ten months of fighting took place, mostly on the territory of the British Mandate, the Sinai Peninsula and Southern Lebanon.

Foreseeing this as a problem, God prophesied through several members of the band. Lead vocal Isaiah declares:

> *In that day the Lord will extend His hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of His people… from Assyria, from Egypt… from the coastlands of the sea. He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth*[229]*. So I am coming to gather all the nations and ethnic groups… They will bring back all your countrymen from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, to My holy hill Jerusalem*[230].

228 Psalm 83:4–5
229 Isaiah 11:11–12
230 Isaiah 66:18–20

The backing boys; Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Micah, Obadiah and Zephaniah, all join in harmony to support Isaiah:

> *Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth… A great company, they shall return here… Hear the word of the Lord, O nations… He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock. It is not for your sake… that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations… Then the nations will know that I am the LORD*[231].
>
> *I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them*[232].
>
> *For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or household gods. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to His goodness in the latter days*[233].
>
> *In that day, declares the LORD, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away and those whom I have afflicted; and the lame I will make the*

231 Jeremiah 31:8–10
232 Amos 9:14–15
233 Hosea 3:4–5

remnant, and those who were cast off a strong nation; and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from this time forth and for-evermore[234].

Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise… At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD[235].

Then the nations will know that I am the LORD[236].

Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them… I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety. They shall be My people, and I will be their God… I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all My heart and all My soul[237].

Though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a while… And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh[238].

But in Mount Zion there shall be those who escape, and it shall be holy, and the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions… Saviours shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's[239].

234 Micah 4:6–7
235 Zephaniah 3:19–20
236 Ezekiel 36:23
237 Jeremiah 32:37–41
238 Ezekiel 11:16, 19
239 Obadiah 17, 21

> *Thus says the Lord GOD: When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they shall dwell in their own land… They shall dwell securely, when I execute judgments upon all their Neighbors who have treated them with contempt. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God*[240].
>
> *You will arise and have pity on Zion; it is the time to favour her; the appointed time has come… Nations will fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth will fear Your glory. For the LORD builds up Zion; He appears in His glory*[241].

Old enemies thought they had scattered Israel for good. Had God not seen the growing hostility of the enemies of Israel against her? Within months of Israel taking up the land, they gathered together to drive them out again. Israel had no army to speak of at this point, but Ezekiel composed the lines:

> *The LORD said: Ezekiel, now say to the wind, "The LORD God commands you to blow from every direction and to breathe life into these dead bodies, so they can live again. As soon as I said this, the wind blew among the bodies, and they came back to life!* ***They all stood up, and there were enough to make a large army***[242].

240 Ezekiel 28:25–26
241 Psalm 102:13–16
242 Ezekiel 37:9 -10

In Ezekiel 25 to 32, God pronounces a judgement on seven nations that will form a confederation with a common aim to destroy Israel. God declares He will destroy: Amon, Moab, Edom, Felicia, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt, if they do not repent of this intention. The time between the pronouncement by Ezekiel and the act, is grace time to repent. When we see the action taking place, we must assume God has judged that they did not. Do you think God foresaw the devastation that Israel's army would leave in the reshaping of the region? Could He have foreseen the destruction of Gaza, or the settlements in the West Bank?

> *If you humbly obey the LORD, then come and worship him. If you do right and are humble, perhaps you will be safe on that day when the LORD turns loose his anger.* ***Gaza and Ashkelon will be deserted and left in ruins****. Ashdod will be emptied in broad daylight, and Ekron uprooted. To you people of Philistia who live along the coast, the LORD has this to say: "I am now your enemy, and I'll wipe you out!" … The LORD God hasn't forgotten those survivors in Judah, and he will help them — his people will take your land to use for pasture*[243]*.*
>
> *And when evening comes, they will rest in houses at Ashkelon. The LORD All-Powerful, the God of Israel, said: I've heard Moab and Ammon insult my people and threaten their nation. And so, I swear by my very life that Moab and Ammon will end up like Sodom and Gomorrah — covered with thorn bushes and salt pits forever. Then my people who survive will take their land. This is how*

243 Zephaniah 2:3 ff

Moab and Ammon will at last be repaid for their pride—and for sneering at the nation that belongs to me, the LORD All-Powerful. I will fiercely attack. Then every god on this earth will shrink to nothing, and everyone of every nation will bow down to me, right where they are. People of Ethiopia, the sword of the LORD will slaughter you! The LORD will reach to the north to crush Assyria and overthrow Nineveh. Herds of wild animals will live in its rubble; all kinds of desert owls will perch on its stones.

The LORD has this to say about the nation of Jordan: The people of Israel have plenty of children to inherit their lands. So why have you, worshippers of the god Milcom, taken over towns and land I gave to Gad? Someday I will send an army to attack you in Rabbah, [valley of Elah, West Bank]. It will be left in ruins, and the surrounding villages will lie in ashes. You took some of Israel's land, but on that day Israel will take it back[244]*!*

For you and me, who live in a limited season of time, our hearts go out because of the destruction we see in these lands, we see the destruction and suffering and cry out to God for his peace in the land. We might see the cruelty of one nation against another, But: the character of God demands justice, once a judgement is pronounced; The mercy of God delays the judgement; The grace of God allowed time for repentance; until the sovereignty of God has to ensure his word cannot be broken.

Once spoken by God, His pronouncement must come to pass, no matter how unjust you and I see them. God did

244 Jeremiah 49:1 ff

put in a get-out clause in the judgment, which God clearly thought had not been taken.

> *If you do right and are humble, you will be safe on that day when the LORD turns loose his anger. [if not: implied], Gaza and Ashkelon will be deserted and left in ruins. Ashdod will be emptied in broad daylight, and Ekron uprooted. To you people of Philistia who live along the coast, the LORD has this to say: "I am now your enemy, and I'll wipe you out!" … The LORD God hasn't forgotten those survivors in Judah, and he will help them — his people will take your land to use for pasture*[245].

Daniel and the church

So we see the longer term doings of God in His chosen nation. But at the same time God deals with his church. God's intention, even before the fall, was a world filled with men and women in communion with him. That was always the plan. So it's no surprise that the Messiah's mission would be a global mission for all nations. Isaiah sets out a mission that is far bigger than one nation in its scope:

> *"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; So, I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth*[246]*."*

245 Zephaniah 2:3 ff
246 Isaiah 49:6:

‘*It is too light a thing*, has a twofold meaning. too small a thing for me to restore only Israel. I will save men and women from all nations’. That is the mission of the Messiah. It also explains the expansion of the kingdom to the gentiles. ‘*So, I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth’*.

Daniel and the boys in the band picked that up, and run with it

> *I, the LORD, have called you for a righteous purpose, and I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and appoint you to be a covenant for the people and a light to all the nations, to open the eyes of the blind and to bring prisoners out of the dungeon and those sitting in darkness out from the prison house*[247].

The backing boys join in with the refrain:

> *In the last days, the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. And many nations will come and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways so that we may walk in His paths’. For the law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem*[248].

Micah pictures, not just Israel as a light, but already many other nations were saying, ‘*Israel’s God is our God too*’.

247 Isaiah 42:6–7
248 Micah 4:1–2

They were organising themselves to say, '*Let us also worship this Creator God, let us learn the Lord's ways*'. I am sorry if I challenge those that say Church was born in Acts, It may have had many prophecies fulfilled in the New Testament as we shall see in a moment, but it has been alive and well since the Garden-of-Eden. It may not have formed an organization, but people of all ages have been faithful to '*Israel's*' God. Many people looked to Israel to enlighten their lives. Relatively few of the Old Testament characters were descendants of Israel, or Jacob.

> *Many peoples and strong nations will come to seek the LORD of Hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat His favour. Thus says the LORD of Hosts: 'In those days ten men from all the nations will take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you*[249].
>
> *For My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place incense and pure offerings will be presented to My name, because My name will be great among all the nations, says the LORD of Hosts*[250].

Gentiles being drawn to Israel's God is confirmed to Abraham at his calling. That calling confirmed that God's people are all around the world but through Abraham and his descendants, they would all be drawn together under one Messiah[251].

249 Zechariah 8:22–23
250 Malachi 1:11
251 Genesis 12:3

So it's no wonder that after his incarnation, death, and resurrection, Jesus summarised the Old Testament as he did in Luke twenty-four. No wonder he would commission his blessed people to be a blessing in texts like Matthew 28:18 to 20, Mark 16:15, John 20:21, and Acts 1:8.

In forty days with his disciples, again and again he declared, as it were, 'I bought them, now go get them'. 'You are blessed, now be a blessing'.

After the nations had chosen their god, God himself set an addenda with Abraham saying:

> *All nations will be blessed through you*[252].
>
> *I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. To a nation that did not call My name, I said, 'Here am I, here I am*[253]*'.*

The Psalmists envision the Gentile world uniting to worship the one true God:

> *All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD; all the families of the nations will bow down before Him*[254].
>
> *Many nations will join themselves to the LORD and will become My people*[255].

252 Genesis 12:3
253 Isaiah 65:1
254 Psalm 22:27
255 Zechariah 2:11

> *For My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to My name, because My name will be great among the nations*[256].

Matthew 24 should be read as a whole. It is an answer to the question '*When will the kingdom come?*' Jesus answered '*Not Yet*'! *When the whole package is accomplished, then!* We are not entitled to divide out one condition. When the gospel is preached to the whole world is a bad translation of what Jesus said. It is not a condition it is a commission. There are growing sections of the church teaching: 'The church has to establish the church on the earth for Jesus to come and reign'. That is a resurrection of a false doctrine that was around in the days of Constantine, and later, the crusades. The Father will decide the moment. Jesus will set up the kingdom. Meantime:

> *This gospel of the kingdom will be preached all over the world as a testimony to all nations, for when the end will come*[257].
>
> *And after that, it will come about, says the Lord, that I will send my spirit on all flesh; and your sons and your daughters will be prophets, your old men will have dreams, your young men will see visions: And on the*

256 Malachi 1:11
257 Matthew 24:14

servants and the servant-girls in those days I will send my spirit[258].

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth[259].

The New Covenant and the Indwelling Spirit[260]

Jeremiah promised a new covenant that would write God's law on the hearts of His people after the Messiah had been cut off, in the context it will be after a new covenant which was signed by the blood of Jesus:

I will put My law in their minds and inscribe it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people[261].

The author of Hebrews announces that this prophecy was fulfilled in Christ and realized in His Church:

"By calling this covenant 'new,' He has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear[262].

It was always the intention of God to amalgamate the gentiles into the chosen people.

And the fate of my people Israel be changed, they will be building up again the waste towns and living in them; they

258 Joel 2:28
259 Acts 1:8
260 Jeremiah 31:31–33 Hebrews 8:8–12
261 Jeremiah 31:33
262 Hebrews 8:13

> *will again be planting vine-gardens and taking the wine for their drink; and they will make gardens and get the fruit of them*[263].
>
> *And this is in agreement with the words of the prophets, Amos as it is said, After these things I will come back, and will put up the tent of David which has been broken down, building up again its broken parts and making it complete So that all will make search for the Lord, and all the Gentiles on whom my name is named*[264].

The prophet Amos foresaw when Israel is restored their land (tent), it would include Gentile nations,

> *I will restore David's fallen booth… that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear My name*[265].

James, at the Jerusalem Council, affirmed that this prophecy was being fulfilled as Gentiles were coming to faith in Christ:

> *The words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written…*[266]

The New Testament is a commentary on the progress of the church through this 'gap-year'. Earlier we saw the first three-chapters of Revelation could be seen as markers of the progress of the church in prophecy, If that was meant to

263 Amos 9:14
264 Act 15:15
265 Amos 9:11–12
266 Acts 15:15

be I do not know, but certainly the decline of the church toward the end of the age is foretold:

> *For the time will come when men will not tolerate sound doctrine, but with itching ears they will gather around themselves teachers to suit their own desires*[267].

> *Because of the multiplication of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold*[268].

> *"People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, abusive…*[269]

267 2 Timothy 4:3
268 Matthew 24:12
269 2 Timothy 3:1–5

Chapter 9: Final Days

By now we should be confident what God predicts through the prophets will come to pass. So, in this last chapter we take a look at some of the things left outstanding from the prophecies. We have already looked at the way Israel and the Church have speculated, become disappointed, disillusioned, and even missed out on events altogether, because preferred doctrines have hidden or mislaid facts. The Pharisees and Sadducees are an example of that. How many did not recognise Jesus when he came, simply because doctrines had blinded expectations about the Messiah? I hope we have seen it is pointless trying to fit the future into Premillennialism, Post millenarianism and Amillennialism, for example. At least two of those groups will be disappointed and disillusioned when the rapture takes place. Humility not pride is the hallmark of a Prophet.

Taken at face value, Jesus tells us of an increase in global pressure, false peace initiatives, and geopolitical alignments surrounding Jerusalem before the beginning of Daniel's final 'week'. Daniel and the boys in the band, urge us to watch the news with open eyes and minds, but not to jump on every war, or rumour of war that does not fill the bill precisely. Daniel is precise:

> *For one week this foreigner will make a firm agreement with many people, and part way through this week, he will*

> *end all sacrifices and offerings. Then the "Horrible Thing" that causes destruction will be put there. And it will stay there until the time God has decided to destroy this one who destroys*[270].

I hope that Daniel has taught us to understand that the nature of the battle is spiritual in essence. God, in his sovereignty can handle any Pharaoh or Nebuchadnezzar that may appear on the scene to disrupt those plans.

> *You will hear of wars and rumours of wars… nation will rise against nation*[271].
>
> *Later, as Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, his disciples came to him in private and asked, "When will this happen? What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the world? Jesus answered: Don't let anyone fool you. Many will come and claim to be me. They will say that they are the Messiah, and they will fool many people. You will soon hear about wars and threats of wars, but don't be afraid. These things will have to happen first, but that isn't the end. Nations and kingdoms will go to war against each other. People will starve to death, and in some places there will be earthquakes. But this is just the beginning of troubles. You will be arrested, punished, and even killed. Because of me, you will be hated by people of all nations. Many will give up and will betray and hate each other. Many false prophets will come and fool a lot of people. Evil will spread and cause many people to stop loving others. But if you keep on being faithful right to the end, you will be saved. When the good news about the*

270 Dan 9:27
271 Matthew 24:6–8

> *kingdom has been preached all over the world and told to all nations, the end will come.*[272]

I hope Daniel has taught us that law is grace. Law explains what God expects of those that enlist in his kingdom. We may not always understand why God expects certain behaviours, but because the battle is spiritual, we cannot know the consequences if we dismiss them.

I hope Daniel has shown also that time is grace, because it gives God time before his judgement is executed and space for us to put into practice what we learn.

I hope Daniel has taught us that the purpose of this ‘time of gentiles’ is to graft Gentiles into the kingdom plan, not for gentiles to try to usurp Israel’s position.

I hope Daniel has made it clear that the direction of travel for this earth is to unite it with the kingdom of heaven because the everlasting purpose of God is to make both new.

John’s vision in Revelation supplements and compliments Daniel. John also visits the same operations room that the boys of the band had visited. John reveals what is going on behind the scenes while these things are going on down here on earth, during the time of Gentiles.

272 Mat 24:3 ff

While John was there, he saw the Lamb take the scroll (God's title-deed of judgment), signifying Christ being given authority to break the seals and bring about the fulfilment of Daniel's final week. Revelation-six parallels Daniel's 70th week by showing how the coming covenant and its deceptions play out on the earth. It shows how the false peace, followed by a break-out of war, famine, and death (symbolized by the four horsemen), are limited or restrained until the sovereignty of God says, 'release them'. Before that command is issued in heaven, here on earth there will be many attempts to deceive us. Here on earth the major plan of the enemy is to pre-empt the spiritual battle and take the human initiative. That he has done so many times before and since Nimrod tried to gather the people together rather spread out, or Abraham misunderstood and tried to assist God in keeping his promise. So we must take a quick look at some of the danger points that may or may not occur during this time.

Dealing with speculation

'The prince to come'

'The prince', has not yet come. At various times, various people have been allocated that title by would-be-prophets, but none fulfilled the criteria to rightly be called so. Among those history has recorded are: Titus, Napoleon Bonaparte; The Mahdi; King Arthur, and many others. None have fulfilled the criteria by which we will recognise

this character. Much speculation has been added to the qualifications of this prince that are not explicit in scripture. Other titles that refer to the same character are: The Antichrist, The Man of Lawlessness / Son of Destruction[273]; The Beast[274]; The Little Horn[275]; The Wilful King[276]; The Lawless One[277]; The Abomination of Desolation[278]; The Wicked One[279].

The ten kings

Much speculation has also attached itself to future resurrection of the Roman Empire. The prince that is to come is assumed to rise to power from within these ten kings. You will remember, in Daniel's dream, Rome was never destroyed, The clay feet that were shattered and spread in his dream in chapter-two. These became ten nations, (ten toes), who form a confederacy. When the Common Market was first formed, the great speculation was that these would become the ten kings, but then the eleventh nation joined, and the speculators went quiet. It is worth watching for future developments, especially if they form a confederated army, but leave the speculating out of it. Rome disintegrated by 476^{AD}. Daniel saw the beast with ten horns and a little horn which becomes a ruler who grows to be the leader over the ten. According to Daniel,

273 2 Thessalonians 2:3
274 Revelation 13:1
275 Daniel 8:9
276 Daniel 11:36
277 2 Thessalonians 2:8
278 Matthew 24:15–16
279 2 Thessalonians 2:9

this is referring to the spiritual drive behind the character, not one specific person. Daniel's instructor tells him the prophecy has two events in mind:

> *I came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days, and also for days yet to come.*[280]

So, this prophecy has a dual nature, it refers to Daniel's immediate future with the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires etc., but also points toward "*the latter days*". So we must expect to see events carried out in history, occurring again in the last days, but we will certainly see the same spiritual force driving both.

> *At the time appointed, he shall return and come into the south, but it shall not be the second time as it was the first*[281].

From these verse outlines, conflicts between kings of the North and kings of the South will be ongoing. From Daniel's time during the Persian Empire through the rise of Greece under Alexander the Great, the division of his empire, the conflicts between the Seleucid (Syrian), and Ptolemaic (Egyptian), kingdoms, and even extending to the reign of the future Antichrist in the last days. Daniel 11:2 to 35, is historical. It foretells the fall of the Persian Empire and the rise of Greece under Alexander the Great.

> *Then I tell you the truth: Three more kings will arise in Persia, and then a forth, who will be far richer than all the*

280 Daniel 10:14
281 Dan 11:29

> *others… Then a mighty king will arise, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases*[282].

This fits perfectly with Alexander the Great. When he died, his empire was divided among four generals[283]. It covers the time of warfare between the Ptolemaic (kings of the South, Egypt) and the Seleucids (kings of the North, Syria), two of Alexander's successor kingdoms. These rival dynasties battled repeatedly, and Israel, caught geographically between them, suffered greatly. This period covers the Maccabean revolt when Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the Jewish Temple by setting up an idol, and sacrificing a pig on the altar. It was a horrific "*abomination that causes desolation*", but it was only a shadow of what will come. Daniel 11:36 continues the prophecy, shifting from Antiochus (Antichrist Past) to a future ruler yet to come (Antichrist Future).

> *At the time appointed, he shall return and come into the south, but it shall not be the second time as it was the first*[284].

This future Antichrist will exalt himself above every other god and speak blasphemies against the true God:

> *Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak*

282 Daniel 11:2–3
283 Daniel 8:8, 22; 11:4
284 Dan 11:29

astonishing things against the God of gods. He will prosper until the time of wrath is completed[285].

Paul picks this up, as does Jesus:

But don't be fooled! People will rebel against God. Just before the Lord returns, the wicked one who is doomed to be destroyed will appear. He will brag and oppose everything that is holy or sacred. He will even sit in God's temple and claim to be God[286].

Someday you will see that "Horrible Thing" in the holy place, just as the prophet Daniel said. Everyone who reads this must try to understand![287]

Jesus identifies this act of abomination of desolation, as the unmistakable signal of great tribulation beginning:

So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)… then there will be great tribulation.[288]

The Tribulation

When will this happen? Part way through the seven years, (probably, half way), But in any case, after the signing of the peace treaty.

And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and part way through the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. He shall cause the sacrifice and

285 Daniel 11:36,
286 2Th 2:3
287 Mat 24:15
288 Matthew 24:15, 21

offering to cease, and on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate[289]

Who will go through the tribulation? There is no direct scripture that ties the rapture to the tribulation. Those that choose to speculate, try to tie it to the rapture. Some will conclude the church is safely out of the way when it occurs, quoting:

For God has not appointed us to suffer wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ[290]

Others do not presume special treatment for the church. They will point out Jesus was talking to the Church not the Jews when he sat on the mount of Olives. The disciples, came privately, asking, ‘When shall these things be and what shall be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the world?'

Jesus answered them with bullet points:

- Take heed that no man lead you astray.
- You shall hear of wars and rumours of wars
- Nation shall rise against nation,
- There shall be famines and earthquakes
- Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, (talking to disciples remember).
- They will kill you: and hate you for my name’s sake.
- False prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray.

289 Daniel 9:27
290 1 Thessalonians 5:9

- The love of the many shall wax cold.
- And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations;
- and then shall the end come.[291]

Far better then, not to pit one scholar's view against another. Far wiser to watch, wait and be ready for either, as Jesus himself recommended.

The Rapture and Resurrection

Looking a little deeper into the rapture (meaning "caught up", which we first mentioned in chapter seven), is when Jesus comes in the air for His Church, raising dead believers and transforming living ones so all may be with Him forever.

The Resurrection: on the last day is Christ returning to reign and judge. In the earliest church teaching, The resurrection and rapture are simultaneous with the second coming, the dead in Christ are resurrected, and living believers are "caught up" (raptured) together with them to meet the Lord in the air. This is a single, unified event.

Separating them into two events, largely took hold in the Brethren church under John Darby (1800-1882). Another Brethren preacher, Cyrus Scofield produced his reference bible, in 1909^{AD}, from the teachings of Darby.

291 Mat 24:3

It is for you to decide if you think these are one event or two, but it is another example of the church trying to pre-empt the occasion by forming doctrine. Wisdom suggests we hold pre-empting doctrines loosely, When events such as these are announced by God, they sound improbable, but, in the light of the accurate fulfilment of Daniel's prophecies they are changed to a certainty.

> *"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will be the first to rise. After that, we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air*[292]*."*
>
> *Many of those who lie dead in the ground will rise from death. Some of them will be given eternal life, and others will receive nothing but eternal shame and disgrace*[293].
>
> *I know that my Saviour lives, and at the end he will stand on this earth. My flesh may be destroyed, yet from this body I will see God. Yes, I will see him for myself, and I long for that moment*[294].

The resurrection is a sure event. God declared it, Jesus confirmed it.

> *"For My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.*[295]

292 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17
293 Dan 12:2
294 Job 19:24
295 John 6:40

Paul expands it.

> *My friends, I want you to know that our bodies of flesh and blood will decay. This means that they cannot share in God's kingdom, which lasts forever*[296].
>
> *I will explain a mystery to you. Not every one of us will die, but we will all be changed. It will happen suddenly, quicker than the blink of an eye. At the sound of the last trumpet the dead will be raised. We will all be changed, so that we will never die again. Our dead and decaying bodies will be changed into bodies that won't die or decay. The bodies we now have are weak and can die. But they will be changed into bodies that are eternal. Then the Scriptures will come true, "Death has lost the battle! Its victory? Where is its sting?" Sin is what gives death its sting, and the Law is the power behind sin*[297].
>
> *Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is*[298].
>
> *For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon,*

296 1Co 15:50
297 1Co 15:51
298 1John 3:2

> *that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. Now he that wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit*[299].

Worshipping before the throne in Revelation, The lamb receives the scroll, unseals it and begins the process which causes the tribulation.

Armageddon / Magog invasion

> *At the time of the end, the king of the South will engage him in battle, but the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots, horsemen, and many ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood*[300].
>
> *He will pitch his royal tents between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him*[301].

It is presumed, but not certain, that John is referring to the same battle, thus locating it in the valley of Megiddo. Daniel's angel seems to say that the great world leader finds his final defeat right there.

> *Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon*[302].

299 2 Co 5:1
300 Daniel 11:40
301 Daniel 11:45
302 Revelation 16:16,

The Kingdom Age

After the 70th week ends, Christ reigns as King over all the nations.

> *And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High…*[303]

The thousand-year reign of Christ, often called the Millennial Kingdom, is a literal future period when Jesus Christ will rule the earth in righteousness and peace following His second coming.

Daniel was not the first in the band to see the final kingdom on earth. But he foresaw the literal, everlasting Kingdom of Messiah and the Son-of-Man, established after the destruction of the world's final empire.

> *I saw what looked like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, and he was presented to the Eternal God. He was crowned king and given power and glory, so that all people of every nation and race would serve him. He will rule forever, and his kingdom is eternal, never to be destroyed*[304].
>
> *Then the greatest kingdom of all will be given to the chosen ones of God Most High. His kingdom will be eternal, and all others will serve and obey him*[305].

John fills in a little more detail:

303 Daniel 7:27
304 Dan 7:13
305 Dan 7:27

> *Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the Abyss and a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years… Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him for a thousand years*[306].

By now you will expect me to add again, it seems so improbable, but the delivery of all Daniel's other prophecies makes it a certainty. So why? Although this millennial kingdom is transitional, it is a necessary bridge between us and the new-heaven and new-earth, another gap-year so to speak. It allows for the fulfilment of at least six promises.

It fulfils God's promises to Abraham, Israel, David and Jesus, which have not yet been fully realized.

> *On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I have given this land—from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates*[307].
>
> *He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever*[308].

306 Revelation 20:1–6
307 Genesis 15:18
308 Luke 1:32–33

> *Ask of Me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth Your possession*[309].

It fulfils God's promises to the Gentiles, the nations, and to the earth itself. The curse will be lifted, creation will be restored, and even the animal kingdom will be at peace.

> *The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat… they will not harm or destroy on all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea*[310].
>
> *The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom like a rose*[311].
>
> *All nations will worship God in Jerusalem*[312]
>
> *War will cease and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares*[313].

It fulfils a promise to the Church and the Saints:

> *"If we endure, we will also reign with Him*[314]*."*

It will restore longevity:

> *No child will die in infancy; everyone will live to a ripe old age. Anyone a hundred years old will be considered young, and to die younger than that will be considered a curse*[315].

309 Psalm 2:8
310 Isaiah 11:6, 9
311 Isaiah 35:1
312 Zechariah 14:16
313 Isaiah 2:4
314 2 Timothy 2:12
315 Isaiah 65:20

> *The Lord will be King over all the earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and His name the only name*[316].
>
> *And He shall reign forever and ever*[317].

During this period there will still be other nations on the earth. One of the biggest mysteries to me is, if the promises we have just read are all fulfilled in this reign, how come nations remaining are still discontent with Jesus' reign. I suppose that is the same question we must ask of Satan, who had a plum job in heaven but wanted more. Ambition is a killer when you plan to take the throne from God. It is clear this spiritual drive is still around in the millennium reign. However the end is coming

Even after a thousand years of perfect government, Satan will be released "for a short time"[318]. This event demonstrates the unchanging truth of human nature. Even in a perfect environment, mankind still needs redeeming grace from craving, driving forces that look for more. Daniel is coming to the end of his vision but he finally sees the great white throne in the situation room.

> *As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A stream of fire issued and came forth from before Him. Thousands upon thousands attended Him, and ten thousand times ten*

316 Zechariah 14:9
317 Revelation 11:15
318 Revelation 20:7–8

> *thousand stood before Him. The court was convened, and the books were opened*[319].

John saw it also:

> *Then I saw a great white throne and the One seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from His presence, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. And there were open books, and one of them was the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their deeds, as recorded in the books*[320].

From idea to Fruition.

This marks the end of the process that God saw in his mind when he first said, *'Let us create'*. From that point, he has determined the whole process.

> *For the creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will, but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until the present time*[321].

One of the boys in the band, Amos, saw it like the Nile in flooding season. It surges down its course bursting its banks and destroying everything in its way, when it

319 Daniel 7:9–10
320 Revelation 20:11–12
321 Romans 8:20–22

reaches the sea it leaves behind the calm tranquil waters. He penned these words:

> *"Because of this the earth will quake, and all who live in it will mourn. The whole earth will rise like the River Nile, it will surge upward and then grow calm, like the Nile in Egypt*[322].

As Peter declares:

> *But in keeping with God's promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells*[323].

Daniel has given us a clear picture of a process that God, from within his character, conceived the idea, declared he would do, and has used his sovereignty to bring it about. His character, has been patient, considerate and loving through the whole process. As we have seen from the glimpses we have had from the 'operations room', He has used rebellions, dissension, and opposition to bring his dream about. Many heavenly beings he originally created to help bring about his idea, have defected on the way. Now the birth of this project has come, and the old order is no longer needed. Now is the time for Judgement not grace.

322 Amos 8:8
323 2 Peter 3:13

Just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment[324].

"And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done[325].

"Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment[326].

Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn[327].

All that is left to do is to roll up the old order, together with all its trials and tribulations, opposers and schemers, and to roll-in the new heaven and earth. The 'dinosaurs' are no longer. Satan is cast into the lake of fire forever.

All of creation has been judged, both spiritual and human, and the new order can begin forever.

324 Hebrews 9:27
325 Revelation 20:12
326 John 5:28-29
327 Matt 13: 30

And I saw the new heaven and earth. The first heaven and the first earth were gone forever. I saw the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven. I saw the whole united church made up from every nation, adorned like a bride made beautiful for her husband. I heard a great shout from the high seat, saying, See, the house of God is built, it is now His living-place among his people. Let his people join God in it and live with Him there.[328]

It is done. I am the First and the Last, from the start to the end. I have freely given life to everyone who needed it. I have given my heritage to everyone who overcame, I will be his God, and he will be my son. But those who refused, the unclean, The takers in life, those who lived for the sins of the flesh, and those who made use of evil powers, those who worshipped material idols, and those that lived false lives, These will join the deceiver in the ever-burning fire which is the second death.[329]

328 Rev 21:1 -3
329 Rev 21:6 ff

Other books by same author

A history of Limmer- Person Place, & Thing

I Think I'd Better Think It Out Again!

Overturning Tables

The right time the right place

Surfing The Scriptures

Is this the Kingdom of God?

So, Who do You Think You are

****

The above E-book versions are available free from :

https://www.obooko.com/

http://www.worldlibrary.org/

https://www.free-ebooks.net/

https://www.bookyards.com/en/welcome